Everyday Struggles and the Production of Livelihoods on the Margins of Casablanca, Morocco

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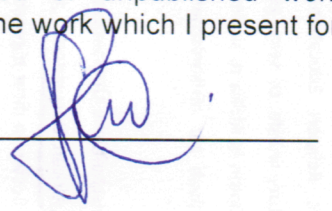
Signed:  Date: December 11, 2015

Abstract

This doctoral dissertation explores the everyday lives and struggles of the inhabitants of Hay Mohammadi, a marginalized and historically criminalized neighbourhood on the periphery of Casablanca, Morocco. Using space/place as the central organizing concept, through the prism of practice theory I consider the ways in which everyday life on the margins is influenced and inscribed by a number of structural factors. These include political and economic agendas, and the actions of a network of actors operating as part of local and international development, architectural heritage, and commemoration regimes.

Based on fifteen months of fieldwork research in and around Hay Mohammadi, I seek to understand how the inhabitants of a historically maligned community on the urban fringe secured their livelihoods through tactical encroachments into urban space and the pragmatic and savvy appropriation of cultural and social development programs and agendas. Providing rich historical contextualization, my analysis explores how the production and contestation of urban marginality and social inequality in Casablanca was rooted in the colonial experimentation with urban planning and the spatialization of socio-economic fragmentation in the aftermath of local political violence and the structural adjustment reforms introduced to Morocco in the 1980s.

In this dissertation I ask: how does the intersection of heritage and commemorative regimes with urban governance policies affect the production of marginality and social identities in Hay Mohammadi? Faced with ongoing contingency and economic precariousness, how did the inhabitants of Hay Mohammadi react to processes of heritage making and rights-based discourses? And what sets of practices enabled the inhabitants of Hay Mohammadi to secure both present and future livelihoods for themselves and their community? The emergent forms of agency and practice I document on the part of ordinary inhabitants and their position within local structures of power I examine, demonstrate a growing disjunction between state discourses and everyday life on the urban margins.

Table of Contents

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Note on Language and Transliteration

I write Moroccan personal names and place names as they would most commonly appear in the Moroccan context (i.e. Hay Mohammadi, Mohammed V, Echouhada, Ain Sebaa). This transliteration is the outcome of a long history of francophone scholarship in North Africa (see Wagner 1993).

Similar to other not officially transcribed languages, transcription of darija – colloquial Moroccan Arabic – has varied greatly. I follow a logic adopted by ethnographies of Morocco, albeit with three exceptions. Firstly, for words that darija shares with Modern Standard Arabic (fuṣḥā) I transliterate according to the IJMES system (i.e. *jam'iyya* or *'aroubiyin*). Secondly, I signal words that have been imported from other languages, such as French, in brackets (Fr.). The meaning and provenance of words is explained when a term is first introduced in the text. I do this as a way of staying faithful to the local context of vernacular language production and its usage (see Introduction for further elaboration on language and terminological choices). Thirdly, I employ Anglicized plurals for words that appear frequently in the text, such as *djellabas* or *kasbahs*.

Finally, Arabic names of prominent political groups or figures are transliterated according to the IJMES system (for example *al-'Adl-w-al-Ihsan*). For words that have entered English discourse ("Qur'an" or "medina"), I follow the common English spelling.

Translations from darija and French into English are mine unless otherwise noted.

Introduction

"We don't need tourists to come and look at us. We need *fluss* (money)! *Fluss*," he repeated, miming the object by rubbing his fingers together. "*Fehemtini* (do you understand me)?" asked the old man after I had explained to him why a group of about twenty onlookers gathered around a guide were craning their necks to look at his house. "This place is a prison. *Hadshi lli bghau yshuf* (Is that what they came to see)?" and the three young men standing around him collectively burst into mocking laughter, while their faces betrayed a measure of embarrassment. "A prison above ground and a prison below ground!" he continued visibly animated. Before I could say anything, he softened his tone and added: "I apologize, young lady. I'm talking *n'importe-quoi* (nonsense); I'm just a foolish old man. Forgive me."

It was the first weekend of April 2013, and I had been accompanying groups of visitors to several sites in the neighbourhood of Hay Mohammadi – a former industrial hub and the site of grave human rights violations from the 1960s until the 1990s – on the outskirts of Casablanca, Morocco, as part of an annual three-day event celebrating the city's architectural heritage. I had begun my fieldwork in the area a few months earlier, proposing to study how the inhabitants of this historically marginalized, impoverished neighbourhood, targeted by state violence in the past, managed to create a sense of belonging within the walls of still standing colonial and post-colonial housing projects designed with policing and social control in mind. Over the course of those first months, I often encountered such outbursts from locals, brimming with the strain of an unending daily struggle for and attendant despair over economic survival in a visibly precarious context, vexed by the preoccupation of outsiders with building facades and architectural details, and their lectures about the significance of Modernist heritage. This did not mean that the inhabitants were not aware of the cultural, historical, and architectural significance of their homes and neighbourhood, as I intend to show in this dissertation. Rather, it revealed a significant disconnect between the network of local as well as foreign experts and elites focused on questions of heritage preservation and commemoration of the neighbourhood's past, and the existential struggles and pragmatic preoccupations that defined the lives of those inhabiting the neighbourhood at the time of my fieldwork.

Single-mindedly focused on the aesthetic and formal aspects of the neighbourhood's built fabric, the retrospective gaze of heritage activists, government agencies and local elites often overlooked and regularly vilified the messy contingency of everyday survival demanded in the face of growing socio-economic insecurity present on Casablanca's urban margins.

Echoing this perspective, scholarly engagements with Hay Mohammadi have predominantly focused on the heroic dimensions of the past, concerned with the role of labour activists in the struggle for independence or the architectural legacy of colonial rule. Taking this omission as a point of departure, this dissertation is concerned with the production of livelihoods on the margins of Casablanca as part of an everyday practice for survival, characterised by what Diana Allan (2013: 5) has called the "political pragmatism, […] resilience and savvy opportunism" that precarious living conditions engender. Based on fifteen months of fieldwork research in and around Hay Mohammadi, I seek to understand how the inhabitants of a historically marginalized and criminalized community on the urban fringe secured their livelihoods through tactical encroachments into urban space and the pragmatic and savvy appropriation of cultural and social development programmes and agendas. Providing rich historical contextualisation, my analysis explores how the production and contestation of urban marginality and social inequality in Casablanca was rooted in the colonial experimentation with urban planning, the spatialization of socio-economic fragmentation in the aftermath of local political violence, and the structural adjustment reforms introduced to Morocco in the 1980s.

Using space/place as the central organizing concept, through the prism of practice theory I consider the ways in which everyday life on the margins is influenced and inscribed by a number of structural factors. These include political and economic agendas, and the actions of a network of actors operating as part of local and international development, architectural heritage, and commemoration regimes. In this dissertation I ask: how does the intersection of heritage and commemorative regimes with urban governance policies affect the production of marginality and social identities in Hay Mohammadi? Faced with what was locally regarded as a chronic state of contingency and economic precariousness, how did the inhabitants of Hay Mohammadi react to processes of heritage making and rights-based discourses? What sets of practices enabled the inhabitants to secure both present and future livelihoods for themselves and their community?

These historical and ethnographic questions aim to provide insights into the shifts and tensions that occurred in and around existing social spaces affected by the increasing precariousness of everyday life on the margins of Casablanca, but also in similarly situated urban communities in Morocco and across North Africa. Before providing an overview of my theoretical approach, fieldwork methodology and the structure and arguments of the following chapters, I begin with a brief introduction of Hay Mohammadi and its inhabitants, and an overview of the broader socio-political context and history of contemporary Morocco.

Casablanca, Hay Mohammadi and urban marginality

In 2014 Hay Mohammadi was making Internet news headlines with a story documenting the protest of several inhabitants faced with the state's last push for their forceful relocation from the neighbourhood's infamous *bidonville*.[1] *Karyane Centra`*, or simply *al-karyane* as the locals referred to it, remained one of the landmarks closely associated with the neighbourhood's history as one of Morocco's oldest, and at one point largest 'slum' settlements. Owing its name to the gaping holes of a colonial era quarry (*Carrières Centrales*), *al-karyane* became a magnet for rural migrants arriving in Casablanca in search of economic prosperity starting in the 1920s. Commonly referred to as the country's *poumon economique* (economic lung), Casablanca was initially a fishing village, later developed by French colonial forces as a node for trade and industry, as well as a "laboratory" for the experimentation with "modern" forms of technocratic urban planning and control (Rabinow 1989). Linked to the rest of the country and the world by an extensive road network and a growing harbour, the city was a focal point in the colonial vision that divided Morocco's territory into *utile* and *inutile* (useful and useless), based on a conventional capitalist model of productivity that relegated the more rebellious hinterlands of the countryside (*al-'aroubiya*) to increasing economic precarity (see Abu-Lughod 1980, Rachik 1995).

Within this categorisation, Hay Mohammadi could be considered one of the country's most *utile* areas at the time. Designated as an exclusively industrial area by Casablanca's earliest urban planning documents, Hay Mohammadi came to house French cement plants, sardine packaging factories and sugar refineries, to mention but a few of the industries that took root in the neighbourhood. This led to further migrations from the

[1] Article available from: http://www.medias24.com/z2015/ECONOMIE/ECONOMIE/12139-Carrieres-centrales-le-bidonville-sera-completement-rase-en-septembre.html

countryside and the expansion of informal settlements in the vicinity of the quarry. As a consequence, the *karyane* grew in size, prompting a series of administrative measures that transformed the quarter into a canvas for utopian urban planning and housing projects that were meant to eradicate the informal settlements and 'emancipate' their inhabitants. Due to a toxic combination of political and economic circumstances that will be discussed in more detail in the next chapter, the neighbourhood entered a period of advanced dereliction in the post-colonial era, and the *karyane* eradication efforts were put on hold several times, only to be resumed recently and be met with popular resistance. This situation has helped feed rumours and popular misconceptions about the *karyane* and Hay Mohammadi more generally, as the image of enduring poverty and decay continues to exert a powerful pull on the imagination of those who see the area as a failed social experiment. To put this into perspective, a few words are in order about the socio-economic landscape of greater Casablanca and the position of Hay Mohammadi therein, as well as in relation to other places.

As the oldest industrial quarter in Morocco, Hay Mohammadi attracted people from various rural areas in search for better economic and life opportunities. In a census taken by the Protectorate administration in 1947, the population of *Carrières Centrales* was made up of migrants from the Tadla plain and the fertile Chaouia region to the east, but also petty traders and shopkeepers from the Souss, of Shleuh ethnic origin (cited in Escallier 1984). As I discuss below, many of my interlocutors no longer had or maintained family ties with the rural regions from where their parents had originally migrated, but almost every household I was acquainted with had at least one family member living abroad. As such, the residents of Hay Mohammadi were also deeply aware of the everyday realities of migrants in Northern America, Western Europe or Saudi Arabia through regular contact with friends and family. In the chapters that follow I also discuss how this link to the wider world fed into the dreams and aspirations of my interlocutors.

Much closer to home, Casablanca, with its surge in expensive shopping malls, futuristic real-estate projects (*Grands Chantiers*), and exclusive villa neighbourhoods also beckoned to these inhabitants, presenting them with a contrast to their everyday lives and environment. Many of my interlocutors, as I will show, also compared the ways in which public and commercial activities were regulated by the authorities in more affluent parts of the city with their perceptions of local degradation and disarray.

Some of these perceptions might have been augmented by the fact that Hay Mohammadi is one of the city's densest neighbourhoods. In 2013-2014, Hay Mohammadi's population was estimated at approximately 140 000 inhabitants (down from 170 000 recorded in 2010 after the majority of the *karyane* inhabitants had been relocated), living in a combination of apartment blocks and four-story 'Moroccan homes' on a surface of 4.2 square kilometres. With a density of 33.3 inhabitants per square kilometre Hay Mohammadi is almost five times denser than, for example, the Anfa neighbourhood, which boasted a relatively unchanged density of 6.5 inhabitants per square kilometre for the ten years preceding my research.[2] The most recent Moroccan census estimated that 96 per cent of the households in Hay Mohammadi had access to running water, electricity, sewage and garbage disposal facilities, although the state of these infrastructures, their ability to cover the needs of the local population, and the quality of their upkeep were a constant source of complaint among the inhabitants I knew, as well as the local administration (cf. Jalila et al. 2015). As Chapter 4 will discuss in greater detail, in 2005 an initiative set up by the Moroccan King to promote social and economic development in key locations had designated Hay Mohammadi as one of several nation-wide 'priority sites' – confirming the degradation of basic infrastructures and the erosion of socio-economic support structures in the neighbourhood (cf. Berriane 2013: 74). Beyond these supposedly measurable markers of under-development, the neighbourhood also struggled to combat pervasive popular views that described it as a uniquely dangerous and criminal place and population.

This dissertation will seek to trace the socio-economic and historical origins of representations of Hay Mohammadi as a criminal, decrepit community, while critically interrogating their enduring presence in public discourses. The neighbourhood is certainly not an isolated exampled of urban marginality in Morocco. As this dissertation will show, newer peripheries continue to expand, frequently giving birth to new spaces of social exclusion and poverty. As such, this study of Hay Mohammadi, while grounded in the historical, cultural and socio-economic specificities of its context, will speak to larger questions of the problems affecting the inhabitants of the urban margins throughout the wider region.

[2] The Anfa neighborhood, one of the most exclusive and expensive areas of the city, has a population of 100 002 inhabiting a surface of 15.26 square kilometers. For a detailed look at Casablanca's different neighbourhoods see *Annuaire Statistique Regional du Grand Casablanca* 2014. Available from http://www.hcp.ma/reg-casablanca/Annuaires-statistiques_a1.html

Hay Mohammadi encapsulates the dilemma posed by urban peripheries elsewhere, as both a physical and a conceptual space assembled from competing (hi)stories and aspirations, manifested by its many names and identities: *al-Hay*, as the inhabitants affectionately refer to it, *Carrières Centrales* as it continues to be addressed by architectural historians, or the *karyane*, as the self-built corrugated tin and plywood quarter came to be known. What sets Hay Mohammadi apart is its particular history with colonial industrial and urban planning, and its subsequent post-colonial dilapidation as the consequence repressive political measures and the devastating consequences of structural adjustment policies, which I examine in greater depth in the first chapter.

Owing to this, the neighbourhood has been depicted as a mythical place in the modern history of Morocco. Architectural historians and heritage enthusiasts in particular have construed Casablanca more broadly and Hay Mohammadi in particular as the origin of 'Moroccan Modernity'. As the birthplace of industrial urbanity, led by its strong worker unions,[3] *al-Hay* was also at the forefront of the anti-colonial struggles during the 1950s. The fight for independence united the merchant elites predominantly represented by old families from Fez, with the members of the industrial labour unions (Cohen 2004, Miller 2013).

Praised as a 'laboratory for modernity' by architects and scholars alike, the neighbourhood has also been depicted as a place of ambivalence, at the same time urban and rural, celebrated as the cradle of artistic expression and political activism during the 1950s and 1960s, but decried as a failed utopia in the present by public administrators and the media. As I will address in depth through an ethno-historical analysis in the opening chapter of this dissertation, Hay Mohammadi has become in recent decades synonymous with marginality, poverty and crime, a paradigm for a failed segment of Moroccan society. Given this context, examining the history of urban planning and housing at one of the sites formerly considered to be the birthplace of visionary new forms of urban living will provide a privileged angle for the evaluation of ongoing processes that have led to the spatialization of social inequality and urban governance in Casablanca.

[3] The first Moroccan workers union, the *Union Marocaine du Travail* (Moroccan Labour Union, UMT) was established in 1955, a year before the country negotiated its independence from France. Although unionizing was tolerated at the time for French and European workers, the colonial administration banned 'indigenous' Moroccan unions. As a consequence the UMT operated clandestinely during its first years, and its members were often violently harassed and imprisoned by the French. See Susan Gilson Miller (2013) and André Adam (1968).

By bringing together the different actors involved in the production, circulation and instrumentalisation of these conflicting representations and strands of Hay Mohammadi identity, one of the aims of this dissertation is to question the idea of a singular, uniform and hegemonic version of Moroccan urban marginality as it has been mythicised and epitomised by official and public discourses in the case of Hay Mohammadi. In this dissertation I will also consider the contradictory way in which such experimentation and control on the margins of Casablanca went hand in hand with state neglect, structural as well as direct violence and the building of monumental architecture, particularly in the post-independence era. Partly owed to the disastrous consequences of local political dynamics and the structural reforms imposed by international financial institutions such as the IMF and the World Bank beginning in the 1980s, Hay Mohammadi is only one such site of historical socio-economic dereliction, as other examples both exist and are multiplying on the periphery of Moroccan urban centres. Nevertheless, the neighbourhood's particular history of activism and state repression, as well as the recent attention it has received from local and international heritage and human rights activists, provide a unique angle for the exploration of the varied forces responsible for the continuing processes of marginalization. By inscribing my ethnographic analysis within a large structural framework, I intend to deconstruct the increasingly powerful discourses that tend to de-historicize, de-politicize and reify the categorical terms used to describe those inhabiting marginalized areas like Hay Mohammadi. At the same time, and more importantly, I aim to provide an account of a generally ignored segment of Moroccan society and its struggle for survival in an era of increased economic insecurity, coupled with the ongoing liberalisation of the Moroccan state. By focusing on the everyday lives of the inhabitants of Hay Mohammadi, my aim in this dissertation is to provide a much needed account of the transformations affecting the working poor and the lower middle classes of Casablanca's margins, while at the same time capturing the actions and influence of wider forces contributing to the transformation of peripheral urban space and the re-production of inequality and social fragmentation.

Too often are neighbourhoods like Hay Mohammadi perceived only through incomplete and out-dated statistics, policing discourses and stereotypical images painted by the media. This dissertation is thus an attempt to deconstruct the reified tropes that continue to circulate and stigmatize the inhabitants of the urban margins – some more visible than others – as a way of showing how local processes are connected to larger

scales of political and economic forces that affect the lives of the growingly precarious urban lower class.

Urban ethnography in Morocco: theoretical approaches

As Daniel Crawford and Rachel Newcomb point out in a recent edited volume dedicated to fieldwork in Morocco, the North African Kingdom holds a special place in the anthropological literature, alongside other historically significant geographical locales in the discipline's tradition such as Papua New Guinea or Indonesia (2013: 18). Although a large number of early anthropological studies of Morocco were located in rural areas, there is also a strong tradition of urban-based research. In fact, one thing that connects Indonesia with Morocco is the work of Clifford Geertz, whose study of the ritual and political life of the mid-size town of Sefrou inspired a number of now canonical texts in the anthropology of Morocco and the discipline more broadly (1979). Geertz's work alongside Hildred Geertz and Lawrence Rosen beginning in the 1960s in the Middle Atlas mountain town has served as both "a guide and a target" to the generation of young anthropologists who came to Morocco starting in the 1970s, as Kevin Dwyer points out in an essay in the same volume (2013: 216). During this period, the works of Paul Rabinow (1977), Vincent Crapanzano (1980), and Dwyer (1982) himself, although still predominantly set in a rural context, attempted to forge a new direction for ethnographic enquiry by challenging the formal dogmas of the time. Female anthropologists such as Elizabeth Fernea (1975), Susan Schaefer Davies (1982), and Deborah Kapchan (1995) further contributed to enlarging the scope of earlier research by placing women and their agency at the centre of their ethnographic accounts. To engage in an ethnographic study of any aspect of Moroccan society, one is therefore necessarily indebted to this significant and impressive scholarly tradition. Specifically, Clifford Geertz's study of the souq of Sefrou has been a reference point in thinking through the social and political implications of what, in Chapter 3, I discuss as the 'suq-ification' of public space in Casablanca. Similarly, the above-mentioned ethnographies of Moroccan women's lives have served as a reminder of the continued necessity to de-Orientalize female lives and practices in the study of Middle Eastern contexts – a reminder that I carry into Chapters 5 and 6 where I focus on domestic realms.

Morocco continues to be a privileged site for research in the region, owing to its relative political stability in the aftermath of the 2011 Arab Spring uprisings, a situation

that has been called the "Moroccan exception" in political science studies.[4] Susan Slyomovics' (2008, 2012) work on the political violence and human rights abuses of what is commonly referred to as Morocco's 'Years of Lead' era has informed my thinking during both my fieldwork and writing process. Although not the main focus of my research, Slyomovics' work on this historical period has provided me with an introduction to one of the former detainees of the Hay Mohammadi underground detention centre, as well as a more profound understanding of the political and historical process of fostering accountability for the abuses of the past. In this respect Slyomovics' work was crucial in aiding my exploration of how commemorative policies and reparations have affected the neighbourhood in recent years.

Current and recent work on Morocco has also done much to advance our scholarly understanding of political movements in the country – such as that of unemployed graduates (Emperador and Bogaert 2011), and the Arab Spring-affiliated movement of February 20th (Bogaert 2011), but also the ongoing tensions and negotiations taking place at the level of local politics (Zaki 2005, 2008, Berriane 2010, 2013). This work has been invaluable for my own understanding of the politics of social contestation and the historical roots of Moroccan civil society activism, as I grappled with questions of contestation and its local manifestations in Hay Mohammadi. A newer generation of anthropologists working on Morocco have also focused on the wider social transformations produced by legal reforms, such as those concerning the family code or *Mudawana* (Mir-Hosseini 1996, Newcomb 2008), reproductive health and women's rights (Hughes 2013), the intersection of religion and psychiatric care (Pandolfo 1996, Van den Hout 2013), tourism and migration (Hoffman 2008, Elliot 2015), and the challenges faced by a growing educated middle-class in the face of renewed economic instability (Cohen 2004). The cultural politics of the Moroccan state have also constituted fertile ground for anthropologists interested in the changing role of public education vis-à-vis state agendas and international patronage (Boutieri 2012), and how the use of new media in mediating Sufi practices can reveal the intricate relationship between ordinary believers, the Moroccan state, and Islamist movements (Spadola 2013). Furthermore, a growing number of young Moroccan sociologists and anthropologists are increasingly researching the political life of the urban margins and informal housing (Aljem 2013, Ait Mouss 2011, Berriane and Bouasria 2011, Peraldi and Tozy 2011). These examples also point to a shift

[4] I address this particularity in reference to the context of my research in the following section that deals with fieldwork methodologies.

in anthropological focus from the rural-oriented studies of Dwyer's era towards an increasing preoccupation with urban centres as the focal points where social transformations are increasingly being negotiated in contemporary Morocco.

Whose Modernity?

The focus of the current dissertation is indebted to this body of scholarship, drawing on some of the cited studies in areas of crossover, but also departs from it in several ways. Firstly, my research on the production of a particular political and social space in Hay Mohammadi, and the relationship with processes of urban marginalization, places the ordinary inhabitants of the neighbourhood and their everyday lives at the centre of my epistemological and conceptual approach. My exploration of these processes is rooted in the historical and political examination of French colonial modernity as a commercial, political and cultural project, and its influence through continuities and discontinuities on Morocco's post-independence era. One of the thematic strands that run throughout this dissertation is a preoccupation with understanding how 'modernity' has been conceived, represented, experienced and instrumentalised as a first and foremost urban phenomenon and experience at various points in the history of Casablanca and Hay Mohammadi.

'Modernity' has become a much-contested term in scholarly debates, and as the historian Frederick Cooper has rightfully observed, the multiplicity of its uses and overuses in both popular discourse as well as academic texts have come to frustrate its analytical potential, generating more confusion than clarity (2005: 113). It is therefore important to distinguish between several cognate terms that appear in this dissertation. Firstly, I employ 'modernity' to refer to a commonly used periodization, especially in art historical and urban studies, that situates the development of Casablanca within a timeline of urban industrialization directly linked to the French colonial project of commercial and industrial expansion that lasted from 1912 until 1956. As architectural historians Gwendolyn Wright (1991) and Shirine Hamadeh (1992) have demonstrated in their respective works dealing with French colonial urban planning in the Middle East and North Africa, 'modernity', in the eyes of the colonial administration in Morocco, was constructed in strong opposition to an invented notion of tradition that purposefully denied and occluded Morocco's history of contact and exchange with Europe (cf. Mitchell 2002: 179-205). Seen as a uniquely urban condition defined by the technocratic preoccupation with planning, the ordering of people and space and their policing, colonial 'modernity' entailed the management of growing urban populations with the use of both aesthetic and

scientific tools such as heritage preservation, mapping, censuses, and public sanitation campaigns.

Writing of the French project in Morocco, Paul Rabinow (1992) has divided these approaches into two "archaeological moments", namely "technocosmopolitanism" and "middling modernism", as a way of distinguishing actions taken in the early days of the Protectorate in Morocco from those in the years running up to Morocco's independence in 1956. In the opening chapter I address the particularities of these two approaches and situate them within the context of similar urban experiments in other French colonial contexts, most notably that of Algeria.

In more recent years, 'modern' has become a frequently employed term in Moroccan political discourse as part of debates around slum-clearance programmes, de-industrialization and the development of a high-tech and financial services economy, also mainly rooted in Casablanca. Throughout the chapters of this dissertation I therefore explore and map out the processual and constantly shifting understandings of urban 'modernity', both as representation and as aspirational status in the context of Casablanca and Hay Mohammadi. As such, my interest is not in establishing a precise definition of Moroccan 'modernity' as it has been talked about and envisioned, starting with the French colonial project and continuing into the period of my research. Drawing on Cooper's arguments once more, I am instead concerned with how representations of and discourses on 'modernity' are used, by whom, and to what effect with respect to my fieldsite.

I use 'Modernism' on the other hand to refer to the specific movement in architecture epitomised in the writings and designs of figures such as Le Corbusier, Mies van der Rohe, and Walter Gropius, to name just a few, and exemplified in Morocco by the brief but intense period of experimentation of a small group of architects known as GAMMA (*Group d'Architectes Modernes Marocains*) – who are introduced in Chapter 1 – during the final years of the French Protectorate (1947-1953). The defining features of architectural Modernism as it was practiced in Hay Mohammadi, and Morocco more broadly, drew on and echoed the central ideas of colonial 'modernity', namely the preoccupation with technocratic measures of urban planning and control, and the creation of conditions for the social emancipation of so-called 'indigenous workers' through architectural forms (Wright 1991). Speaking in the context of the British Colonial enterprise, Mark Crinson (2003) makes the case that architectural Modernism not only gave flesh to the abstract ideas of colonial 'modernity', but should also be seen as a

polysemous term and the conceptual nexus linking colonial enterprise, the global expansion of capitalism and rationalist ideas about social development. This semantic relationship becomes significant not only for the discussion of heritage claims and practices observed during my fieldwork in Hay Mohammadi and Casablanca – whose main focus were identifying and preserving the distinctly Modernist character of the neighbourhood's built fabric, as will be discussed in Chapter 1 – but also for its role in the ongoing (re)affirmation of Casablanca as Morocco's foremost modern city *par excellence*.

It is also worth noting that, owing to the predominant use of French language by cultural and political elites as well as those involved in Casablanca's heritage preservation scene, the distinction between 'modern' and 'Modernism' was often collapsed, as the French term *moderne* came to qualify both architecture and city life. Significantly, few of my interlocutors from Hay Mohammadi made use of these French terms in everyday life.[5] The Arabic word *jadid* (new) was the preferred term for speaking of new town development as well as the historical term used to differentiate the new French quarters and towns from the older, walled city core, the *medina qadima.* People also used temporal qualifiers such as *qabl* (before) and *al-yum* (today) in order to speak of how things were in the past in comparison to the present of our conversations. Additionally, categories such as urban (*haddaryin*) and rural (*'aroubiyin*) were frequently employed in everyday speech by many of my research collaborators as a way of distinguishing the 'crass' dwellers of the countryside from the 'sophisticated' inhabitants of cities. My interlocutors also commonly employed the distinction between *rumi* (modern, western, lit. 'from Rome') and *beldi* (of the country, traditional) as a way of categorizing home furnishing styles and sometimes personal dress styles. These discursive practices together with the repertory of gestural and embodied forms of everyday being-in-place will be discussed in following chapters as part of the everyday production, contestation, and negotiation of social difference and marginalization in Hay Mohammadi. What is important to keep in mind about these different terms is that, although their meaning was flexible, varying with speaker and context, they were always employed in a comparative and supple way that spoke against static understandings of what constituted the 'modern' (Deeb 2006: 14-20).

[5] Here I draw on Debra Spitulnik's (2002) poignant argument on the importance of attending to the linguistic forms and specificities employed in describing local understandings of what 'being modern' or 'modernity' entails.

Class matters

Secondly, accounts of Casablanca have tended to omit the experience and histories of the working and lower classes – or what in Morocco is generally referred to as the *sha'abi* (popular class) segment of society – from accounts of the city's history and making. Existing works have done much to advance our knowledge of the role of colonial, political and economic forces and elites as part of processes of 'modernization' (Rabinow 1989, Wright 1991), or the symbolic function involved in the display of power and its visuality (Ossman 1994, 2002). Art historians for their part have predominantly privileged aesthetic and formal aspects of the city's built fabric, documenting the impact and visions of the city's (predominantly foreign) architects and planners (Cohen and Eleb 2002, Avermaete 2010, von Osten 2010, Chaouni 2011). In shifting the focus of academic inquiry to documenting the lives and struggles of this largely ignored segment of Casablancan and Moroccan society, I take my cue from a number of important anthropological studies on urban marginalization and the politics of difference in the region. Specifically, I have found Farha Ghannam's study (2002) of the relocation of lower- and working-class Egyptians to Cairo's periphery in the 1970s. Ghannam's study provided a unique account at the time of how a marginalized group tactically appropriated state discourses about modernity and responded to the hegemonic production of urban space through various discursive and material practices. Diane Singerman's (1995) work on informality and the everyday politics of popular (*sha'abi*) quarters further highlighted 'grassroots' and community strategies for economic participation and survival. Although situated in a very different historical, geographical and political context, James Holston's (1990) now classical critique of Brasilia's planning and lived segregation has also been useful in thinking through the ways in which Modernist experiments with technocratic measures for ordering and defining city life have led to the intense spatialization of economic inequality and difference, and the marginalization of certain populations.

However, as Sarah Green, anthropologist of spatial relations and border regions points out, marginality is a tricky, unstable anthropological concept, "a kind of poor relation to 'otherness' and 'difference'", evocative of unequal locations and social hierarchies within a given socio-geographical context (2005: 1). According to Green, Euro-American anthropologists became increasingly enthralled with marginality's analytical potential because of the way in which it might shed light on previously discarded, ignored, or transgressive socio-cultural and politico-economic identities and

processes in various locations (ibid: 2). In many cases, an anthropology of marginality was seen as a way of providing counter-narratives to hegemonic accounts, questioning normative understandings of what is considered central and authoritative (Seremetakis 1991: 1-7). Similarly, I am interested in the ways in which the historical production of marginality in Casablanca can illuminate lacunae and incongruous aspects of accepted official histories. Other approaches, such as those sby Ghannam (2002) and Holston (1990) (cf. Caldeira 2001), have used the ethnographic study of marginality to explore the potential for resistance, alternative forms of agency, and avenues for contestation open to those who find themselves in marginalized positions.

At the same time, both during the fieldwork and analysis phases, I remained attuned to the ways in which marginality can be strategically used by various stakeholders, including the marginalized, as a way of constructing claims and generating multiple forms of symbolic capital. This is akin to Anna Tsing's writing on the Meratus Dayaks in Indonesia who deploy their marginality as a way of disturbing power balances: "The cultural difference of the margins is a sign of exclusion from the center; it is also a tool for destabilizing central authority" (Tsing 1993: 27).

In this dissertation, I question the dichotomous relationship between center and margins, deeply aware of the fact that neither is fixed, bounded, or made up of homogenous spaces, practices, and people. At the same time, the spatial dimension implied in the use of the term 'margins' is salient for the particular historical and political context I discuss. By this I do not mean that Hay Mohammadi's marginality is primarily a function of its geographical position vis-à-vis a certain center – be it the geographical core of Casablanca or the physical location of political, cultural, and administrative power, namely Rabat. As I detail below, this is also true of the neighbourhood's position. However, I intend to focus on the spatial mainly in reference to the various approaches, employed by both colonial and post-colonial regimes, that were explicitly meant to order people in space as to facilitate their governing and control, while allotting them different spaces according to constructed ethnic and social categories.

It is important to stress, then, that (social) marginality is not a recent phenomenon in Morocco or the region. One such notable contribution to the historical study of marginality in the Maghreb is the volume *Etre marginal au Maghreb* (1993) edited by the late Fanny Colonna and Zakya Daoud, collecting a wide spectrum of methodological and disciplinary approaches and engagements with marginality in the region. Significantly, it

was neither the "global" nor "spatial" or geographical dimension of marginality that inspired the collected contributions (1993: 4). Instead, the authors' focus is on marginalization as a subjective and individual experience of 'non-conformity' to dominant social norms – experiences that are reflected through the eyes and words of protagonists such as prostitutes, the mentally ill and spirit-possessed, or exiled foreign labourers in the late nineteenth century in Algeria, to cite a few of the examples provided by the volume. Through the work done by a social history approach that recovers ignored accounts of transgression and the agency involved in the fluid negotiation of social norms in the late nineteenth and twentieth century, contributors such as Sarah Ben Nefissa and Mohammad Ennaji deconstruct the image of a static, homogeneous, normative idea of social conformity in the Maghreb. While my own aim in this dissertation is to explore the socio-spatial dimensions and experience of marginality through historical and cultural representations as well as the everyday perspective of several individuals with differing socio-economic and gender identities, I draw on Colonna and the other contributors' conclusions about the "temporal and social" continuities that have shaped processes of marginalization in the region (Chapter 1).

Where my approach differs from that of Colonna et al. is in considering the production of socio-economic difference intimately connected to longer processes of spatialization through urban planning and housing policies, which can ultimately be traced back to colonial forces and continued under the independent Moroccan state. Crucially, Janet Abu-Lughod's 1980 landmark book *Rabat: Urban Apartheid in Morocco* rigorously studied and illuminated the historical roots of Morocco's urban segregation, demonstrating the systematic approach that led to the creation of the dual city model that continues to affect the organization and life of Moroccan cities to this day, as I will discuss in Chapter 1.

Casablanca's unprecedented growth during the colonial period was also marked by this dualism, which led to the creation of a significant urban periphery, beginning with industrial neighbourhoods such as Hay Mohammadi and Ain Sebaa,[6] and continuing to this day with the creation of new 'slum relocation' areas pushing the city's edge further out onto former agricultural land. Although initially situated on the geographical margins of Casablanca, nowadays Hay Mohammadi is surrounded by decaying industrial infrastructure and similar working-class neighbourhoods. It frequently described by my

[6] The Ain Sebaa neighbourhood borders Hay Mohammadi to the northeast and is also an old industrial area of Casablanca. The two form together the administrative section of Ain Sebaa-Hay Mohammadi Prefecture.

interlocutors from both within and outside the neighbourhood as an urban ghetto – a choice I discuss in more detail in the following chapters. Is marginality then a useful term given Hay Mohammadi's current socio-spatial situation?

According to Robert Escallier (1984, 2001, 2004), a French human geographer who has studied the transformations of Moroccan urban peripheries since the 1970s, the inhabitants of the growing urban periphery of Casablanca could be classified into several 'typologies' in order to reflect the internal differentiation of a very dynamic group. Drawing on a socio-economic study conducted in 1978, Escallier argues that the Moroccan 'popular' or *sha'abi* classes, which constituted 82 per cent of the urban population at the time, can be divided into four sub-categories: the "transitional", "traditional", "inferior", and lastly the "marginal" (1984: 344-346). These distinctions are important as they begin to capture some of the internal diversity of the popular, or lower classes – albeit in a way that assigns categories which are highly unstable in practice and frequently overlap, as I discuss in more detail in the following chapters.

As part of this classification, the truly marginalized are isolated individuals or families who cannot escape from highly precarious conditions owing to factors defined by Escallier as "rural origin, illiteracy, lack of professional training", or a certain lack of familiarity with the urban context (2004: 117, cf. Adam 1968: 705-732). In Escallier's estimation, these are also most likely the inhabitants of *karyane*- or *bidonville*-type dwellings, who struggle to find even temporary employment. As my own ethnographic material will discuss, however, in 2013-2014 many *karyane* dwellers did not correspond to this typology, demonstrating instead high levels of education alongside high levels of unemployment and economic precarity. The majority of my research interlocutors and neighbourhood inhabitants could be described as belonging to a mixture of what Escallier calls 'traditional' and 'transitional': descendants of both the first waves of rural migrants who suffered the 'upheavals' catalysed by colonial modernization, and of a minority of migrants from smaller urban centres (such as Tetouan or Oujda), who were pivotal to the changes introduced by the French administration (Escallier 2004: 117). At the same time, Escallier is also aware that nuances do exist. He concludes that marginalization is not simply defined by either geographical location or access to economic resources, but a more diffuse existential affect related to feelings of social and political exclusion over an extended period of time, which influences the identity of those who experience this state (2004: 120). Hence, not all those who are part of the urban margins are necessarily

economically destitute, while not all those who are 'excluded' from society are necessarily lower class (cf. Zaki 2005: 127). Would precarity then be a more suitable analytical term for speaking of the inhabitants of Hay Mohammadi?

Etymologically speaking, "precarity" is derived from the Latin root *prex* or *precis*, meaning "a prayer" or "an entreaty".[7] It suggests a position of vulnerability, finding oneself in disempowered and uncertain situations. Despite a recent surge in anthropological writing and engagement with precarity in the after-math of the 2008 economic crisis (Graeber 2011, Adams 2012, Hamdy 2012, Holt, Norris and Worby 2012, Mains 2012, Bear et al. 2016, Stout 2016), anthropologists have long been attuned to the historical conditions and cultural specificities of living with economic insecurity, social marginalization, and the erosion or "loss of state and corporate provisioning" (Muehlebach 2013: 298, cf. Aggarwal 1995, May 1996). This heightened anthropological attention to precarity as a structure of feeling has documented they ways in which the term has become a shorthand for the multiple ways in which people around the world experience the effects of neoliberalism (Muehlebach 2013: 299).

As such, in this dissertation I use precarity to speak of the particular affect that is experienced by those who have suffered social, geographical and economic marginalization. Drawing on Andrea Muehlebach's discussion (2013), I find that precarity has the advantage of capturing the particular contradictions of the contemporary period both in Morocco and elsewhere, whereby increasing access to education, public services and infrastructures such as health services, running water, and electricity have not necessarily led to increased socio-economic security for the lower-class (cf. Cohen 2006, Berriane 2013: 23). In this context, marginality and feelings of social marginalization can both feed into the general affect associated with precarity, and also function as explanatory schemes for those facing prolonged periods of socio-economic insecurity.

As I will show in the following chapters, marginalization and precarity are closely entangled and co-productive aspects of life for the urban lower class in Casablanca. As the ethnographic material will detail, marginality in the case of Hay Mohammadi entails living with the psychological trauma and the legacy of historical political violence, the social stigma of economic insecurity, as well as the material manifestations of a socio-economic and political process of institutionalised neglect visible in the decaying housing and public infrastructure. Although Bruno Latour has cautioned against what he considers

[7] See Lewis, Charlton, T. 1890. *An Elementary Latin Dictionary*. New York, Cincinnati, and Chicago: American Book Company.

the "postmodern conceptual and theoretical fetishization of the margins" (1993: 122), by critically engaging with the uses and representations of marginalization and marginality as they relate to Hay Mohammadi, I intend to show that we should be equally critical of the normative depiction of the margins.

While I explore in historical depth the forces and processes that have led to Hay Mohammadi's marginalization in particular, it is also worth noting why a focus on marginality can be a useful epistemological approach for studying the urban spatialization of social difference. As Chris Shore and Susana Trnka have recently argued (2015), and as I will discuss in the case of Hay Mohammadi, peripheries have a history of being employed as testing grounds for the practices of capitalism, as well as techniques for policing and crowd control, especially when those margins housed the workforce that sustained the commercial ventures implanted through economic colonialism, as was the case in Casablanca and Hay Mohammadi. Writing an account of the margins and the marginalized is also a way of highlighting neglected aspects of processes of social change that hegemonic versions have tended to omit. As a method, then, "peripheral vision" – in Shore and Trnka's (2015) formulation borrowed from June Nash (2001) – is a way of disrupting normative understandings of social structures and phenomena that might otherwise be absent from official narratives.

At the same time, in considering the manifold production and contestation of marginalisation in Hay Mohammadi, I have also tried to heed Asef Bayat's call against essentializing the urban poor or the margins, a tendency that he traces back to the Chicago School studies, and whose influence continues to be critically engaged with in international development discourses and certain sociological debates (cf. AlSayyad 2003).[8] Bayat identifies the four main prevailing perspectives, "that is, the essentialism of the *passive poor*, the reductionism of *survival strategy*, the Latino-centrism of the *urban social movement model*, and the conceptual perplexity of the *resisting poor*" (2010: 56, emphasis mine). In their stead he proposes that a focus on the "quiet encroachment of the ordinary" and "social non-movements" is better suited to capture the political and socio-economic context of the Middle East and North Africa. Similarly, I find the concept of

[8] Nezar Alsayyad (2003: 9) uses the example of Charles Abrams' *Man's Struggle for Shelter in an Urbanizing World* to point out how Chicago School techniques led to the production of highly deterministic and limited analyses of urban informality in the so-called Third World.

"quiet encroachment" a more appropriate analytical term for studying the discrete, yet collectively significant, manifestations of urban contestation present in Hay Mohammadi.

The emergence of socio-economic groups of marginalized, socio-economically precarious urban inhabitants is intrinsically tied to the creation of new social structures and relations of production as part of the colonial drive for industrialization in Casablanca (cf. Montagne 1952, Adam 1968, Escallier 1984, Berriane 2013). Shana Cohen has suggested in her book on the historical and nationalist roots of the Moroccan middle-class (2004) that economic investments in industry and agriculture, coupled with commercial exchange with Europe during the Protectorate era, led to the creation of new social structures, among which a growing section was occupied by what French sociologist André Adam has labelled the new "subproletariat" (1968: 706), people who were lured by the opportunities promised by colonial urban development (Cohen 2004: 37). This dissertation aims to complement these studies and show that, coupled with the urban planning policies of the era, this led to the spatialization of social structures and the production of a particular *sha'abi* or lower-working-class habitus and sense of place.

Owing to the concept's history, most people either associate 'class' with the image of factory workers, or regard it as an abstract economic tool used to capture differences in income distribution. As James Carrier recently pointed out (2015: 28), the concept of class has had a relatively long history, although its significance for anthropological theorizing has been on the wane in recent decades. Carrier sees this as a function of both the Cold War era, as well as the cultural turn in anthropology and the rise of postmodernism in social sciences more broadly (ibid.). However, as recent work in the anthropology of labour and economic anthropology has shown (Collins 2003, Donner 2008, Kasmir 2008, Mollona 2009, Morell 2011, Neveling 2015), class remains a particularly productive analytical concept in an era of increased economic liberalization, financialization, and growing economic precarity across the globe. This is because, in its broad conceptualization, a theory of social classes and their organization presents us with a model for studying society. I find this model particularly suited for an anthropological approach, because it regards humans as social beings mutually shaped and constrained by their local contexts, whose everyday relationships predominantly revolve around the securing of livelihoods (cf. Marx 1976 [1867], Weber 1946). Many levels of external and internal complexity can be attached to this model, which is why I find it valuable for the study of social change in the context of Hay Mohammadi. I would like to stress that by

using this model my intention is to leave room for the inevitable shifts and transformations that occur both between various social groups as well as within any one group, as is the case with the urban lower class in Casablanca. Furthermore, and most importantly for this dissertation, this model for engaging with the organization of social life allows for an analysis that considers space and its structuring at the hands of various actors and processes as a major factor in the production of social relations and broadly defined classes.

Certain scholars (cf. Tozy 2011) have argued that a discussion of class in the context of Morocco remains an elusive task, as the economic structure of society as well as the history of tribal organization and affiliation renders such discussions inadequate. Escallier (2001) on the other hand has claimed that while tribal and ethnic ties to the ancestral village played important support roles within the first years of rural migrants' arrival in cities, they were slowly replaced by 'solidarities' built around a shared socio-spatial experience of life and work on the urban periphery, but also as a consequence of wider political and economic forces which affected both urban and rural areas in the past decades (ibid. 2001: 20). Recent ethnographies of social and political organization in Casablanca seem to support this claim (Ait Mouss 2011, Berriane 2013) – a discussion I take up in more detail in the chapters that follow. Others, such as Mounia Bennani-Chraïbi (1994), have instead criticized the persistent focus on political elites and upper-class actors in the history and sociology of Morocco, to the detriment of a sustained study of the lower and middle-classes. In recent years, however, sociologists and anthropologists of Morocco have begun not only to re-examine the question of social class and social difference, but also to study the transformations these categories have undergone in recent decades. Shana Cohen has focused squarely on questions of class, as exemplified by the emergence of the middle class and their role in Morocco's nationalist and then globalisation project (2004). Laetitia Cairoli's (2011) study of 'factory girls' in Fez obliquely approached issues about how female participation in industrial labour affected local ideas about women's changing place in society. Rachel Newcomb (2008: 5) also presents her study of middle- and lower middle-class women in Fez as a contribution to the growing body of work on the production and reproduction of social class in Morocco. The lower-class in Morocco have received their fair share of attention, albeit from sociologists and political scientists interested in macro-trends within large segments of the population, and this has often been under the term of 'the poor' or in their capacity as 'slum-dwellers', a discursive practice

that is partly responsible for the essentialist way in which the urban poor have been represented.

André Adam's brief mention of the industrial workers at the end of the colonial period in his study of social change in Casablanca remains one of the few examples of an attempt at comprehensively studying the social shifts and impacts of an increasingly fragmented urban social landscape. Adam can be said to classify this social group based on a traditional Marxist understanding of class, where relations of production define one's place in the structure of society. However, given the progressive de-industrialization of the Moroccan economy more broadly and of Hay Mohammadi in particular, as well as recent shifts caused by increasing globalisation, in this dissertation I have found Pierre Bourdieu's formulation of social structure helpful for a critical analysis of class (trans)formations. As recent work in the anthropology of class and labour has also argued, this is a necessary move, because as forms of capital and its distribution locally as well as globally continue to evolve, so should our approach to how we define group positions based on access to that capital (Denning 2004: 229, Dworkin 2007, Carbonella and Kasmir 2015).

In *The Logic of Practice*, Bourdieu considers class as the result of social relations that are embedded in an extensive and complex network of institutional and private actors, which require constant sustaining through daily actions of self and community. As such, the capital that defines one's class is not simply economic capital, but a broader purchase on social, cultural and other forms of symbolic wealth. In Bourdieu's words "[s]ocial class is not defined solely by a position in the relations of production, but by the class habitus which is 'normally' (i.e., with a high statistical probability) associated with that position" (1987: 372). Significantly, Bourdieu situates the domain for the production of class distinctions at the level of everyday life. In his view, class as a form of social relations is constructed through daily interactions. It is important to note that, as Jane Goodman (2003) has demonstrated, Bourdieu's work in *The Logic of Practice* should be critically approached as part of wider, long term "political project […] intended to contribute, albeit problematically, to Algeria's political future" (ibid: 783). Goodman convincingly argues that Bourdieu developed several of the concepts and theoretical arguments in *The Logic of Practice* from earlier studies commissioned by a French government research centre on Algerian peasants-turned-labourers in war resettlement camps (see Bourdieu et al. 1963, Bourdieu and Sayad 1964). While acknowledging these critiques, as well as the

provocative and productive potential of exploring how Bourdieu's research in the resettlement camps might converse across time and space with the conditions and transformations in Hay Mohammadi, such a theoretical and historical attempt is beyond the scope of this dissertation. Instead I use Bourdieu's elaboration of social class as a conceptual guide in my examination of how social difference is linked to the production of social space and various forms of locally significant symbolic capital.

Similarly, this dissertation is also marked by a concern with the 'everyday' domain, where the spatialization of class identities and the production of modern-ness is forged and contested. Ethnography has historically been defined by its concern with the "microhistories" of the local (de Certeau and Giard 1998), as a way of deconstructing normative understandings of the state, marginality and the 'popular classes'. While a focus on local phenomena and the everyday lives of our research participants is one of the defining characteristics of the way anthropologists have engaged in the practice of fieldwork, the political potential of a critical study of everyday routines was most famously formulated by French sociologists following the second World War, starting with Henri Lefebvre's first volume of *A Critique of Everyday Life* (1947), and continuing into the 1980s with the work of Guy Debord and the Situationists (1977), Georges Perec's treatment of the "infra-ordinary" (1978), and Michel de Certeau and Luce Giard's work on the "practice of everyday life" (1980). Still, the 'everyday' remains an elusive category that has resisted definition, "a vague and problematic phrase", as Ben Highmore has pointed out in his own engagements with the topic (2002: 15, 2004). One of the most oft-cited definitions provided by Lefebvre in the foreword to the 1957 edition of the French original of *A Critique* is no exception: "Everyday life, in a sense residual, defined by 'what is left over' after all distinct, superior, specialised, structured activities have been singled out by analysis, must be defined as a totality" (2008 [1957]: 97). This seemingly paradoxical definition begins to hint at some of the difficulties of methodologically and epistemologically dealing with 'everyday life'. While everyday life is seen as consisting of all those myriad events that are too banal to warrant serious theoretical attention, it nevertheless contains the totality of our lived experience, framing and feeding into that which we consider to be 'eventful' or noteworthy instances. As such, the revolutionary potential of everyday life, as de Certeau saw it, was that the very routine and innocuous practices defining it offered the possibility of creative resistance. Thus, banal activities such as walking in the city and various forms of spatial "bricolage" and "making do"

become "tactics" that allow for the radical appropriation and subversion of hegemonic discourses and material realities (1984).

In analysing the various registers of spatial practice and appropriations in Hay Mohammadi as well as their representation by various stakeholders, I complement the work of de Certeau with that of Asef Bayat on "ordinary encroachments". This allows me to engage with such acts as both pragmatically driven and underpinned by a tacit logic of contestation, without renouncing their often-ambivalent character. Furthermore, as Hay Mohammadi is poised to become engulfed in the 'mega-project' visions of a new generation of planners seeking to re-affirm Casablanca's status as Morocco's foremost modern city, I claim that it is crucial to shift attention to the everyday practice of ordinary people struggling to secure both livelihoods and living space.

Fieldwork context and methodology

Most anthropological studies are in equal parts born out of the passionate intellectual and personal curiosity of their ethnographers. Similarly, my interest in the topic of this dissertation has been a long time in the making and deserves a few words of clarification. What I now regard as the half-planned and half-fortuitous journey that brought me to the subject of my study was described by one of my closest research participants in Hay Mohammadi as simply "*maktub"* (written, destined). At the time, although I valued what I took for an affectionate appreciation of my presence in the neighbourhood, I also resisted what I saw as a deterministic way of looking at life, convinced of my own agency in choosing the path I had followed. Nevertheless, there is something to be said about the relationship between ethnographic study and the role of what Deborah Kapchan has so wonderfully described as the "unconscious projection that issues from our bodies, […] and pulls us along as if on a string" (2013: 167). Following my senior year of undergraduate studies in anthropology and visual studies at Harvard I was awarded a Michael C. Rockefeller Fellowship to pursue a year of "purposeful postgraduate immersion in a foreign culture of choice".[9] I had initially selected as my destination an oasis community in southern Libya, but to my chagrin the fellowship committee, listing safety as their main concern, asked me to reconsider my choice. With the wisdom afforded

[9] The Fellowship's mission shares significant affinities with the main principles of anthropology, with the stated exception that "as a general rule, the year's experience should not be primarily one of academic study," or "the practice or furtherance of a professional career". For more details on the Fellowship's history see: http://uraf.harvard.edu/michael-c-rockefeller-memorial-fellowship.

by hindsight, I now see the demanded alteration to my original plans as the fortunate occasion that 'pulled me along' and into what has been a six year-long relationship to a place and several communities, to whom I owe an immense debt of intellectual and personal gratitude.

I first arrived in Morocco in August 2009 planning to live for a year with a Berber oasis community in south-eastern Morocco. After an intensive two-month immersion course in darija (Moroccan Arabic) and the Berber dialect of Tashelhit,[10] I set out to learn about the life of a semi-nomadic community and I became interested in how those I lived with made a life in the increasingly precarious environmental and economic conditions of rural Morocco. As I followed the journeys of several young people I had met, out of the oasis and into the cities (Rabat, Casablanca), I began to enquire with the help of those early contacts into the roles that urban peripheries, housing projects and informal architecture played in this internal migration process. I extended my stay in Morocco by an additional year and became gradually more fluent in darija through my close involvement in the conception and production of two documentary film projects. It was through working with a team of young Moroccan women to compile a video collection of the life stories of marginalized women that I was introduced, among other things, to the neighbourhood of Hay Mohammadi and its inhabitants. As I set about gathering site information, I learned of the area's history and the architecturally famous housing projects designed and constructed by the colonial administration in the 1950s, which led me to pursue further archival research and formulate a set of questions for future investigation.

The second documentary video I worked on during the spring of 2011 was commissioned by an international development agency working with the Moroccan authorities on promoting renewable energy and sustainable architecture methods. In this second role I was able to meet several institutional actors working in the field of urban planning and new town (*villes nouvelles*) construction, and to learn about the *Villes sans bidonvilles* (VSB, *Cities without Slums*) programme that aimed to eradicate all forms of 'informal housing' by the year 2013 (a date that was later extended).

As I prepared to complete the second documentary, the 2011 Arab Spring revolts swept through the region, altering ingrained conceptions about its political and social landscape. The Moroccan King Mohammad VI responded to local echoes of the Arab

[10] There are three main Berber dialects in Morocco: Tarifit, Tamazight, and Tashelhit, each corresponding to a geographical region, starting in the north with the Rif and stretching into the south across the Atlas mountains.

Spring – locally known as the "February 20th Movement" – in a proactive manner by agreeing to a referendum and a reform of the constitution, thus avoiding the turmoil that besieged neighbouring countries.[11] Although external observers viewed the King's decisions as a step towards increasing democratisation (Pelham 2012), many of my long term friends and collaborators saw the promised reforms as strategic co-optation of contestation, resulting in 'window-dressing' rather than any substantial reform. As a consequence, at the time of my fieldwork concerns remained over the limits of freedom of expression, particularly with respect to the voicing of contesting public demands. Subsequently, public space and public forms of contestation continued to be intensely policed as I will explore in Chapter 4. While these political events are not the overt concern of my dissertation, I mention them here because they framed and informed the historical moment and political climate that also shaped the context in which the research for the current dissertation was undertaken. Furthermore, my personal experience of this period benefitted my knowledge of everyday politics and history of protest in Morocco, and invariably shifted the parameters that had until then governed the limits of public discourse and contestation. I also mention these early field experiences, because they were crucial in providing me with a significant measure of familiarity with contemporary Moroccan society, while at the same time setting the groundwork for what would later become my doctoral research project. Significantly, during those first years in Morocco I became part of a close community that welcomed me and continued to act as a steadfast support-network upon my return for fieldwork.

I thus returned to Morocco in January 2013 to undertake fifteen months of field research, this time as a PhD candidate, having undergone the required ethical, methodological and Modern Standard Arabic language training as part of my programme at SOAS in London. I maintained Hay Mohammadi as the focus of my research and set about taking care of the practical arrangements that would allow me to conduct research with the inhabitants of the neighbourhood. I now realize that the period of my fieldwork took place at a time of intensified interest in Hay Mohammadi from a variety of 'outsiders'. This included foreign, predominantly French, volunteers involved in social development and educational projects, architects and architecture students (predominantly

[11] Protests erupted in Morocco on February 20th 2011, galvanised by similar street movements sparked in Tunisia on January 14th 2011 by the death of Mohamed Bouazizi. The Moroccan King publicly engaged the protesters' demands and set off a process of constitutional reform leading to strengthened parliamentary powers, but ultimately doing little to alter the monarchy's hold on political authority. See Paul Silverstein (2011) and Chloe Muldering (2014).

Dutch and Belgian, but also Moroccan) interested in studying the formal qualities of the neighbourhood's built environment, and what could be broadly described as cultural activists and artists (Moroccan and foreign) interested in the 'unique experience and texture' of what they saw as the 'mythical' Hay Mohammadi. In this sense, those I initially encountered could easily place me within this local landscape of professionals, researchers and activists, which greatly facilitated my access to both people and places. At the same time, as I gradually developed closer relationships with several inhabitants and local groups, people began to see me "as both individual and cultural category, whether or not the ethnographer acknowledges this" (Okely 1992: 24) and to "see through to [me] and talk to [me] as if [I] were a real person" (Hastrup 1987: 104).

Nevertheless, my initial contacts in Casablanca also came from this local network of activists. Prior to setting out for fieldwork I had contacted an architectural preservation association that had been publicly visible in the effort of promoting local built heritage. Casamémoire and its staff were very open and welcoming, and provided me with contacts to other local actors. I was also able to observe and participate in various events organized by the association in my capacity as a researcher. As I discuss in more detail in Chapter 1, I underwent the formal guide training they provided to all their volunteers engaged in heritage preservation activities, and conducted participant observation during public lecture events and the three-day Annual Heritage Festival. I conducted formal interviews with several of the members and staff of Casamémoire and had many informal, casual conversations with the very same people at various points in my fieldwork. I was also given access to the archives and documentation the association collected on the topic of urban planning and its history in Casablanca and Hay Mohammadi, and on one occasion was called on to provide English translation help with a funding application for a project that the association was developing.

I met the majority of my interlocutors in Hay Mohammadi, however, with the help of a local social welfare association, or *jam'iyya*, that was known for their work fighting urban degradation in the neighbourhood who had risen to prominence in recent years owing to their increasing access to foreign expertise and funding as I will detail in the next chapters. I had also discovered the association while preparing for fieldwork, due to their online presence. I contacted the *jam'iyya* shortly after my arrival in Casablanca in January 2013, and I was warmly welcomed by the acting director and staff, who provided me with a privileged angle on the workings of associational life in the neighbourhood as well as

generous access to both important local decision makers and ordinary inhabitants. I was invited to visit their office on a regular basis and began to volunteer my time twice a week to the *jam'iyya*'s youth activities. I also assisted at special events and was occasionally asked to photograph or record exhibitions or training seminars. I conducted formal interviews with a number of former volunteers and members from the neighbourhood, and was given unfettered access to the association's documents and grant applications. Several older inhabitants, who were considered by the community to have 'important memories' based on their personal history in the neighbourhood, were incredibly generous in providing me with accounts of their lives and considerate answers to some of my clumsily formulated initial research questions. It was in this way that I was able to meet the founder of Morocco's first labour union (*Union Marocaine du Travail*, UMT) and one of the oldest residents of Hay Mohammadi, as well as one of the pre-eminent journalists of the labour movement, who shared with me accounts of both their life stories and a personal angle on the larger events that shaped the neighbourhood's social and economic landscape in the post-colonial era. I also collected other life-history accounts from several inhabitants who became my main interlocutors over the course of my fieldwork.

The people who allowed me the greatest access to their lives, however, were the two women and their families who feature largely in the text: Amina and Asma (both pseudonyms), two young women from Hay Mohammadi, without whose close friendship, generous hospitality and good humour the current dissertation would be much poorer. While being close in age might have initially sparked my relationships with them, they were later founded on the sharing of ideas, dreams and concerns. When I first met them, Amina and Asma were both working at the *jam'iyya*, assisting with the various social projects underway at that time. Although they later took positions elsewhere, they remained my close friends and interlocutors throughout the entire period of my fieldwork. Having been born and having spent their entire lives in Hay Mohammadi's oldest and most legendary quarters, Amina and Asma had rather different life histories and socio-economic positions, reflecting the heterogeneous make-up of the neighbourhood's larger social landscape.

Amina was in her early thirties at the time of my fieldwork, having grown up and lived her entire life in the Derb Moulay Cheriff quarter, infamous for the underground detention centre that operated there at the height of Hassan II's repressive regime. Her mother had migrated to Casablanca from a small village in the Chaouia region in the

1960s – Amina could not remember if her mother had ever told her the exact date – and had married her father, a worker in one of the local factories. Her father had also migrated around the same time from the region around Oujda, in the north-east of the country, where he already maintained a household, which made Amina's mother the second wife. Amina never met the other family, and neither of her parents took her on visits to the *bled*, their home village, while they were alive. In fact, Amina claimed that until she was eighteen years old she had never left the neighbourhood. The loss of both her parents to cancer during her late teenage years both opened and shrunk Amina's world. Her older sister had travelled abroad and kept only minimal contact with Amina, who had been left to care for a younger sister who suffered from a severe chronic illness. As will be discussed in more detail in Chapter 5, Amina struggled with the responsibility of maintaining a home and caring for her sister. She had left university before finishing her degree and energetically took on the task of providing for her small family of two. As often seems to be the case with anthropologists' closest relationships in the field, in many ways Amina was not a typical member of her community. As an unmarried orphaned young woman responsible for running her own household, she benefitted from a certain freedom of mobility that was not necessarily shared by women her age in the quarter. At the same time, Amina was fully aware that her community "kept an eye on her", as she would say – for better or for worse – and she conformed to the local moral standards, wearing the veil in public and never receiving men in her home. Owing to this, Amina was highly regarded by her community, and I suspect that her friendship with me was one of the reasons why other people in the community quickly extended their warmth and hospitality to me. Although at times she became impatient with my incessant questions, Amina would often suggest people I should speak to and invite me along to neighbourhood events she thought I might find interesting.

Amina had met and befriended Asma during one of the *jam'iyya* neighbourhood social programmes, and the two of them occasionally met for shopping outings or afternoon coffee. Asma was the same age as Amina, and had grown up in a similarly sized small apartment, in a social housing estate built during the 1950s near the old core of Hay Mohammadi, where the *karyane* was slowly being dismantled in 2013. Asma's family, although of similarly modest means, was large and boisterous, numbering twelve siblings in total. Asma had also lost her father, to a work accident, when she was a teenager. In his absence, Asma recounted, her mother had taken the upbringing of her children very

seriously. Benefiting from a small pension and from occasional help in the form of food-stuffs provided by her extended family in the Berrechid region, Asma's mother ensured that all the children received an education up to high school level. At the time of my research, the majority of Asma's siblings had married and set up their own households in the vicinity, but the parental flat was still crammed with two unmarried sons, Asma herself, as well as different visiting nieces and nephews. Even though Asma often complained that they slept "like sardines", the home was always cheerful and various distant relatives occasionally came for extended visits. The second youngest of her siblings, Asma also veiled herself in public and enjoyed a degree of mobility similar to Amina's, which was partly owed to the fact that Asma had been working for various charity foundations since finishing her university studies for a law degree. Upon meeting me, Asma immediately took me under her wing and, not unlike Amina, would invite me on a daily basis to share meals with her family or to accompany her on errands around the neighbourhood or in downtown Casablanca. On these occasions she would often speak to me unprompted about the social and the built fabric of the area, articulating clear answers to questions I had not yet thought of posing. After Asma's wedding to her university sweetheart a few months into my fieldwork, I was further integrated into the family of her in-laws, who also lived nearby, and began spending more time with Asma in the apartment that she rented with her husband.

One year into my fieldwork, the relationship between Asma and Amina became strained, eventually ending with the two suspending any form of communication, around the time when Asma learned of her pregnancy. While this situation grieved me, I was unable to fully understand the reasons for their breaking of the friendship. There was no overt argument that either of the two could point towards, and any attempt on my part to reconcile them eventually failed. Neither expected me to suspend contact with the other, and they often asked me to relay news of the other's health and wellbeing, always expressing concern and never malice, which only amplified my confusion. Throughout the writing of this dissertation I maintained close contact with both Asma and Amina. After the birth of Asma's first child three months after my departure from fieldwork, the frequency of our contact increased, allowing me to stay abreast via Internet video-calls of the general events occurring in her life as well as the neighbourhood.

Several other interlocutors appear throughout the dissertation: these range from people I had regular but less intense contact with (such as staff at the local *jam'iyya*, and

members of my main informants' extended households, such as uncles, cousins or siblings), to more casual acquaintances like Hind, Fatima, Ibrahim, Safia, Sara N., Khalid and Sara M., or those I only met briefly due to their own fleeting presence in the social landscape of Hay Mohammadi and the networks I became part of and followed closely. These interlocutors varied in age, gender, and education, but in general shared a certain sense of belonging in and preoccupation with Hay Mohammadi.

The educational and professional backgrounds they reported in our conversations are worth mentioning here, because they partly confirm but also further nuance existing official census data available from the 2011 Annual Report of the Moroccan *Haut Commissariat au Plan* (HCP) for the Greater Casablanca area (Annuaire Statistique 2011).[12] As such, the majority of my long-term interlocutors who were above the ages of 16 at the time of the research were educated to at least high school level, a fact reflected in the 70 per cent high-school educated population found in the census data. Those who had failed to pass the Baccalaureate examination had gone on to pursue professional or technical training as shop assistants, mechanics, tailors, bakers, or electricians.

A small minority of my interlocutors who had passed the exam had also obtained university degrees (according to the same census, 7 per cent of Hay Mohammadi residents had earned a university degree) in a variety of domains – ranging from accounting, engineering and law to philology and foreign languages. Among the latter, however, there were those who had not managed to secure positions in their field and instead had reoriented towards jobs in the private sector as language teachers, translators, or workers with local charity and non-governmental organizations. I return to the individual professional and educational background of these interlocutors as they are introduced in the text. According to the latest estimates of the HCP, 23.7 per cent of Moroccans with university degrees spend on average one year looking for a job after graduation (Annuaire Statistique 2011: 21). And, indeed, several of my younger interlocutors who had recently completed university degrees struggled with prolonged periods of unemployment or temporary and precarious jobs outside their field, a theme that I discuss in Chapters 3 and 4 in particular.

While there the HCP does not collect data on unemployment numbers or income levels at the neighbourhood level, the local *jam'iyya* claimed that their own surveys

[12] The *Haut Commissariat au Plan* is a national planning and census institution with the administrative rank of a ministry. For the 2011 data pertaining to Hay Mohammadi see the *Annuaire Statistique* 2011. At the time of writing a detailed breakdown of the most recent results from the 2014 census was not yet available.

showed that local youth unemployment had risen to 30 per cent placing their neighbourhood as one of the most deprived in Casablanca.[13] The census data confirms the neighbourhood's status as a predominantly working-class area, where the majority of local jobs are held by craftsmen who engage in artisanal work such as upholstery, carpentry, or plaster work. From those interlocutors between the ages of 40 and 80, a small fraction, predominantly male, had been employed as civil servants and managed to maintain a certain standard of living owing to facilities they had gained through their professional position – including a relatively stable pension in some cases, rent-controlled housing, or state-subsidized loans for buying an apartment. Several older female interlocutors described themselves as housewives (*femme au foyer*), although a number of them also contributed to the household income by taking on sewing and tailoring jobs, baking for neighbours on special occasions, or working as independent distributors of cosmetic and household products. For two of my interlocutors, taking on sewing jobs and cosmetics' distribution was the only source of income for providing for their family's needs.

Many of these interlocutors could be described as lower- or working-class, earning monthly incomes at or considerably below the 2013-2014 official minimum income level of 2 333,76 dirham (£ 170) per month from 'formal' or 'informal' jobs, or a combination of the two – a distinction I examine in detail and more critically in the chapters that follow (cf. Chapter 3 and 5). As in many other places in the region, young people (inhabitants between the ages of 15 and 35 according to the Moroccan HCP) constitute almost two thirds of the neighbourhood's demographic make-up, posing both local concerns about their proper place and role in society, as well as political and economic issues for the Moroccan state, as I discuss in Chapters 3 and 4 (see Appendix D). A smaller number of my interlocutors described themselves as middle class (in French *classe moyenne)*, having secured much-coveted positions in local or multi-national private companies as accountants, engineers, IT-technicians or entry-level trainees. While their incomes positioned them at a considerable advantage in relation to the majority of my other local interlocutors, these individuals were often expected to and did contribute to the finances of their extended families, thus participating in the creation of local support networks, which I examine in more detail in Chapter 5.

[13] The 2011 data compiled in the *Annuaire Statistique de la Région du Grand Casablanca* 2011 only lists the percentage of active and inactive population, which can comprise both children who are still in school and inhabitants of retirement age. For a discussion of how statistical methodologies are chosen for measuring unemployment and their impact see Hussmanns et al. 1990.

In order to respect and protect the privacy and confidentiality of all, I have used pseudonyms throughout the text, and in certain cases altered details describing their living circumstances. Exceptions have been made where the interlocutors I spoke with expressly agreed to have their real names used or spoke to me in their capacity as public figures – such as the well-known former detainee and activist Fatna El Bouih, and the local historian and scholar Najib Takki – or as leaders in the community, as is the case of Abdeljalil Bakkar, the president of the *jam'iyya* where I was so generously welcomed from the outset of my fieldwork. Having made contact with the *jam'iyya* in Hay Mohammadi in the first days after my arrival in Casablanca, I was impatient to begin meeting people and finding a place to live in the neighbourhood. After making several inquiries, I was told by those I had met at the community organization that finding a room to rent in Hay Mohammadi would not be an easy feat given that families of up to ten were often forced to share two rooms, and most large shared homes were so densely populated that one could find up to sixty people where initial designs had been made for only half as many. Additionally, renting an entire home or apartment proved to be equally unsuccessful, as once more the densely populated nature of the neighbourhood made the availability of such a place close to impossible. Further concerns voiced by those at the community organization about the moral appropriateness of an unmarried, foreign young woman living alone in the area led me to temporarily rent a room in a neighbouring *sha'abi,* working-class area of Casablanca.

However, soon after meeting Amina and Asma, the two invited me to spend the night at their respective homes whenever I wished, which led to my spending half the week between the two households and half at my rented apartment, where I could type up and organize my notes. As a consequence, my daily routines in the field became structured around the main households who welcomed me into their lives: Amina's home in Derb Moulay Cheriff, Asma's parental home near the *karyane*, Asma's newlywed apartment and her in-laws' home in Ain Sebaa. While in the beginning I attempted to spend extended amounts of time with several other households (notably those of Fatima, Safia, and Hind who are mentioned in chapters 3, 5, and 6 respectively), it soon became apparent that there would be methodological drawbacks to spreading my time over a larger number of households, whose expectations of sociality and hospitality meant regularly spending several days together. Although I occasionally visited several other households, especially during feasts and holidays, or for the Friday meal, in-depth research with a limited number

of individuals allowed me to build a certain level of intimacy and trust that would not have been possible had I chosen to work with a larger sample. At the same time, as I gathered material on the particulars of these individuals' lives, I constantly went back to the available statistical data on the neighbourhood, both to set my findings into a broader framework and to compare the ways in which the micro-level confirmed, nuanced or destabilized the conclusions of macro analyses found in state surveys and scholarly works.

These data were complemented by formal interviews with twenty local stakeholders – local administrators, urban planners and architects, slum relocation consultants, managers of public social-development programs, school teachers, cultural and human rights activists, NGO workers, retired civil servants, and public relations representatives for the new tramway network. Some of these people were selected for their positions within local and regional institutions, and/or for their expertise on and various professional experience in Hay Mohammadi, other were suggested by acquaintances for their personal involvement in and knowledge of local processes and history. For most of these formal interviews I used a voice-recorder and/or took notes. The informal discussions and casual conversations that occurred during everyday life in the households and with the people I spent the majority of my time with were recorded in short-hand in a small notebook I carried with me at all times. In addition to these jottings I also kept a daily fieldwork diary where I recorded detailed accounts of my everyday life and interactions in the field. These practices solicited different reactions from my interlocutors, with some seeing it as proof of the seriousness with which I approached my research, while others, like Amina, often found it initially amusing and occasionally annoying. While never explicitly forbidding me to take notes, she would often signal her wish for not to having something recorded in my *daftar* (Ar. school notebook) by telling me that we were now on *vacances* (Fr. holiday), and I should just enjoy whatever we were doing. I have respected her wish, and while some of these instances informed and deepened my understanding of certain research aspects, I have refrained from specifically referring to those events in the text.

On a regular basis, my daily routine during fieldwork involved waking up with the members of the household where I was spending time that week, helping prepare breakfast and eating together while watching the morning news. In the case of Amina and Asma, during the period when they were involved with the local *jam'iyya* I would often accompany them to work, where I would spend some time observing the running of the

youth programs. As my fieldwork progressed, I was invited to help out with the twice-weekly youth programs, and eventually ran an after-school photography and drawing activity with a small group of about ten children under fourteen from the neighbourhood. During lunch breaks I would regularly join Asma at her mother's house, where we would often encounter members of her family. This allowed me to keep abreast of the small events that marked the lives of the extended family and the general ebb and flow of Hay Mohammadi social life. During the weeks I spent at Amina's house, I would either join her for lunch or we would eat at the office together with some of the other men and women on staff. During these occasions I also got to know the latter better, and carry conversations outside the framework of NGO life.

While having access to the variety of volunteers, members, and staff affiliated with the *jam'iyya* was crucial for allowing me to find my footing in the neighbourhood during the initial months of my fieldwork, I gradually became acquainted with other inhabitants who not only had no relation to the *jam'iyya*, but also had never heard of it. One such example was an older shared-taxi driver I met during a downpour, Nabil, who upon hearing of my research interests told me of his passion for local history, his collection of colonial postcards, and offered to introduce me to the inhabitants of one of the Team 10 housing estates. It was in this way that I met Fatima and her family (Chapter 3 and 5), who regularly invited me for Friday couscous and afternoon chats while she worked on sewing jobs for her neighbours. I also occasionally used afternoons to schedule some of the formal interviews I carried out or to consult archives in Rabat. On a regular basis, however, I joined the households I was spending time with that week in the preparations for the afternoon snack, or *casse-croûte* as it was generally referred to. This entailed the purchasing of fruit, olives and sometimes eggs from the local street sellers, and the warming or baking of bread or pancake-like Moroccan pastries. The different meal rituals I was able to observe and take part in exposed me to the variety of consumption strategies and budgeting tactics these households engaged in, presenting me with a close look at how local difference was produced and mediated through everyday domestic practices as well as different local spaces of commerce and consumption.

Evenings were commonly spent around a vegetable tagine after all the members of the household had returned from their day's work. As television programs played in the background they occasionally sparked family discussions that often turned to themes that were central to my research, as I discuss in the next chapters. On weekends, I would

regularly join Asma (or her mother) and Amina on their visits to the *hammam*, help with the weekly cleaning, and go on more extensive shopping outings to suqs that were well-known for bargain prices. Amina also enjoyed going to the beachfront in Anfa for strolls, and we often went on these outings together with other female friends of Amina who liked to comment on people's dress and the differences in leisure spaces and options available to women from their neighbourhood. As many of my interlocutors were busy with jobs during the week, weekends also provided important opportunities for going on walks and errands and spending time in the public spaces of Hay Mohammadi. As a consequence, I often used days during the week for going back to my rented apartment to type up and organize notes.

This flexible arrangement allowed me to become gradually familiar with the neighbourhood, while also clearly placing me within the social structure of the community as the long-term guest of my female hosts and their families, without putting a strain on their living situations. At the same time, it provided both my interlocutors as well as myself with the much-needed option of taking breaks from one another.

In recent years, anthropologists have become more willing to speak of the strain placed on them by the ideal of complete immersion in the society or context they propose to study (Crawford, Newcomb and Dwyer 2013). Less has been written about our interlocutors' need for privacy and occasional respite from anthropological scrutiny. There is of course a long history of accounts detailing how ethnographers have encountered situations where their presence was unwelcome or provoked outright suspicion and hostility, and such anecdotal accounts have often been used as a way of acknowledging the power imbalance inherent in many ethnographic encounters to varied effects (Geertz 1973, Rabinow 1977, Dwyer 1982). These are not the cases I wish to speak of here, and perhaps owing to a combination of chance, local context and political climate I did not experience any such heightened instances of suspicion and inhospitality during my fieldwork.[14] To the contrary, my eventual reception into the lives and families of those I came to know, befriend and learn from in Hay Mohammadi was one of the most generous, warm and open welcomes I could have hoped for. However, I believe it is equally important to acknowledge the more mundane instances in which our interlocutors are

[14] Anthropologist Katherine E. Hoffman (2013: 101) recounts how the lack of official research permission during her doctoral fieldwork in Morocco in 1995 caused many at her research locale to be "suspicious of her motives". While at the time of my fieldwork other researchers I was acquainted with in Morocco recounted stories of police surveillance and suspicion, I myself never knowingly experienced similar scrutiny from the authorities.

simply re-affirming their human need to be outside the gaze of ethnographic inquiry. This meant that there were certain occasions I was not present for. I believe, however, that the purpose of ethnographic fieldwork is not to record an exhaustive account of our research participants' lives. Rather, I have instead chosen to allow my interlocutors to shape the contours of my inquiry around the themes and topics that were meaningful to their everyday preoccupations with life in Hay Mohammadi. Furthermore, the pace of life in the city also meant that many of my interlocutors were often busy working several jobs and attending to family obligations where my presence would have been considered a burden. In the same vein, this dissertation is also not an authoritative or exhaustive history and description of either Hay Mohammadi or the Moroccan urban margins.

One such notable omission – religion (understood as the Islamic faith and its practice) and its role in the political and social life in Hay Mohammadi – deserves a few explanatory words. Religion played a significant part in the lives of my close informants, as piety, broadly understood, was central to my interlocutors' idea of building and maintaining morally good lives. In this context, people's religiosity informed conceptions of a desirable moral character, but was never in my presence expressed as a direct political project. Furthermore, although the majority of my female interlocutors, including Asma and Amina were veiled, they never attended mosque prayer and with some exceptions, seldom prayed in my presence or enticed me into conversations about religion. When such conversations did occur with other interlocutors in the neighbourhood, generally older women, they were often focused on comparing and contrasting what they called "our faiths"; I often told people that although I had been christened in the Eastern Orthodox tradition I was not a practicing Christian. As such, I see the ostensible absence of religion from my text as the reflection of the social milieu of my research. While I was aware of local inhabitants who were occasionally involved in charities affiliated with the politically militant Islamist group *al-'Adl w-al-Ihsan* (Justice and Spirituality), the role of political Islam was not the direct focus of my research. At the same time, it is important to mention that in recent years different forms of political Islam have become a significant social force to reckon with in Morocco and thus require a few words of clarification.

Unlike its North African neighbours, Algeria and Tunisia, with whom it shares a history of French colonial occupation, the Kingdom of Morocco is a constitutional monarchy. The King holds the title of *Amir al-Mu'minin* or Commander of the Faithful, his religious legitimacy resting in his descent from the Prophet Mohammad, through the

Alaouite Dynasty.[15] Despite the role played by religion in sacralising the power of the monarch, Islamist actors have only gradually begun to hold powerful positions in Moroccan politics. As in other states in the region, Moroccan Islamist parties first gained popularity during the 1960s as an alternative to the politics of the nationalist left wing, but also as a reaction to the failures of those in power to provide ordinary people with improved socio-economic conditions (cf. Glennie and Mepham 2007). At the same time, King Hassan II also encouraged the formation of organized political Islam as a way of weakening his secular political opponents, hoping that Islamists would be easier to co-opt into supporting royal interests (cf. Howe 2005, Amghar 2007). According to political scientists of Morocco, the legacy of this historical dynamic is most strikingly embodied in the recent popularity and surge experienced by the Islamist Party of Justice and Development (PJD), which carried the popular vote in the parliamentary elections following the 2011 uprisings and whose president became prime-minister of Morocco in 2012 (Cavatorta 2013.)

Both scholars and policy experts have only recently begun analysing this shift to conservative, religiously inflected politics. The same is true for the effects on both society and more radical forms of militant Islam in the country, such as Sheikh Abdessalam Yassine's once outlawed movement, *al-'Adl w-al-Ihsan* (Cavatorta 2013, Montserrat Emperador 2013). Although the latter tended to be lumped together with the PJD as part of the so-called 'Islamist opposition', there are significant ideological and organizational differences between the two, not least the fact that *al-'Adl w-al-Ihsan* was banned under the rule of Hassan II and its leader imprisoned, owing to the fact that Sheikh Yassine contested the monarchy's religious legitimacy (cf. Tozy 1999, Howe 2005). Although Sheikh Yassine was released from house arrest in 2000 when Mohammad VI took the throne, he has continued to advocate non-violent contestation of the regime. This further differentiates the movement from more recent radicalising influences and militant organizations linked to Al Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM) which are considered responsible for the devastating suicide attacks that shook Casablanca in 2003, perpetrated by radicalised youth from one of the city's more recent *bidonville* areas (see Chapter 1).

Throughout my fieldwork as well as the writing of this dissertation, I have tried to engage with existing reified tropes on the susceptibility of the urban margins to Islamic radicalisation (cf. Bayat 2007). But also, as I will discuss at more length in Chapters 3 and

[15] For a detailed discussion of the Alaouite Dynasty and political history of Morocco see Waterbury (1970) and Hammoudi (1997).

4, the prestige and socio-economic opportunity associated with 'secular' NGOs known to be affiliated with Western donors meant that many of the inhabitants I knew and spoke with oriented themselves towards the latter in hopes of accessing certain valued services, such as foreign language training for their children or potential trips abroad. In comparison, political Islam played a minor role in the lives of my closest interlocutors.

Language and class politics

As a visibly foreign, un-married young woman speaking darija (Moroccan Arabic) in Casablanca, I was often a puzzle for those I met for the first time, and an amusing exception for those who came to know me closely. Darija is the local spoken vernacular of Arabic, part of what is considered the Maghrebi Arabic dialect continuum,[16] making it mutually comprehensible with Tunisian and Algerian dialects. Similar to dialects in the region, darija incorporates French and Berber words, with the majority of the vocabulary borrowed from literary Arabic. The greater part of television programming and new media, as well as publicly available commercial advertising is predominantly formulated in darija; the latter occasionally using a transcription system borrowed from Internet chat culture (for example "3yit fabour"/ "call free", which mixes Arabic and Spanish in this example). Modern Standard Arabic (fuṣḥa) was not a language commonly used in everyday conversation, although official and administrative bodies, and certain traditional media employ it in their communications. Significantly, French language continued to have a strong and symbolic presence in everyday speech, as I explain below.

Given Morocco's history as a former French protectorate and a continued use of the French language in formal education and business, [17] it was generally assumed by my interlocutors that foreigners would more readily speak a European language than engage in the "difficult" apprenticeship of darija, as many of my interlocutors' observations revealed. Given this context, beyond the quite pragmatic aspect of being able to converse with people freely on an everyday basis, my ability (and to some people's eyes, willingness) to learn and speak a vernacular language was both a social asset as well as prism through which I experienced the particular post-colonial social relations that marked everyday interactions in Casablanca. When members of the heritage and NGO sector met in Hay Mohammadi or elsewhere in Casablanca, I was often surprised that entire events were held in French, given that all those present were Moroccan. The currency of

[16] See Jordi Aguadé (2003) and Dominique Caubet (2007).
[17] See Charis Boutieri's (2011, 2012) work on the topic of bilingualism in formal education and training.

language performance and its power to inscribe such events in particular spheres of legitimacy will be explored more closely in Chapter 2. During these same events, code switching from French to a form of darija that incorporated the use of terms specific to Hay Mohammadi was occasionally used by my close interlocutors as a way of excluding certain members of the upper class. It should also be noted that beyond those of my interlocutors who operated as part of these networks, with minor exceptions, the majority of my interlocutors in Hay Mohammadi were largely fluent in French, but in their everyday lives communicated in darija. Thus, my ability to dialogue with them in darija and to clumsily pick up local vernacular terms specific to the area (see especially Chapter 4) was not only central to my project of studying marginalized everyday practices, but also played a significant part in the process of becoming intimately socialised into the worlds of my interlocutors.

Conversely, my access to elite networks and upper class interlocutors in Casablanca was seldom facilitated by my literacy in the Moroccan vernacular, although it sometimes occasioned amused reactions. In these contexts, being able to speak a mostly accent-free French alongside my foreign university credentials guaranteed that formal interviews that I tried setting up with local elites and public administrators would always be honoured. Although seemingly providing an advantage with a particular group of people, association with French language and culture was not always an uncomplicated matter. To all those I met while doing fieldwork, I always introduced myself as a Romanian pursuing a doctoral degree in London. On several occasions, my upper class interlocutors underwent a visible transformation towards a more relaxed stance upon learning I was "neither French nor Belgian", as some people seemed to assume based on my "hard to place accent". A female urban planner I had met early on in my research told me that such reactions might be owed to the fact that as a Romanian – even one with a western European institutional affiliation – I was perceived as less "threatening" than a French counterpart might have been. While her statement seemed to acknowledge the tense and ambivalent relationship Moroccan elites maintained with France, facets of this complicated relationship were also visible in the reactions of my main interlocutors towards heritage and commemoration activities in Hay Mohammadi, an aspect I touch on in Chapter 1. Furthermore, as was frequently pointed out by both my close interlocutors as well as casual acquaintances I made during fieldwork, Moroccans shared a particular post-colonial/(post)soviet relationship with Romania. Specifically, several of the older public

administration officials I met during my research would launch into fond recollections of their high school substitute teachers brought from Romania during the 1970s as part of a short-term agreement between the two countries in the aftermath of Morocco's independence from France.[18] Younger Moroccans associated Romania with opportunities for higher education, particularly those interested in pursuing medical degrees, as this was considered a rigorous second option for those who could not gain access to a Western European institution.

To my close interlocutors in Hay Mohammadi I spoke at length about my family in Romania, my experience of growing up in a working-class area and everyday life. My identity as a post-soviet Eastern European who had been brought up inside and around the socialist architecture of a now de-industrialised town was often seized upon by my interlocutors in Hay Mohammadi as a way of explaining the ease with which the interactions between myself and the community had occurred. At the same time there were aspects of my cultural identity that continued to mark me as 'other', such as coming from an Eastern Orthodox religious-cultural space and having done my studies abroad in an American and British cultural tradition. Despite these differences, I was far from being an anomaly for those I met during fieldwork. Many had family members living in Western Europe or had met and befriended Romanians in Spain or Italy as seasonal workers, where they had built solidarities with one another, seeing themselves as belonging to a wider group of discriminated and low-paid labourers. Echoing what Lila Abu-Lughod has so poignantly countered in her seminal essay *Writing Against Culture* with regards to a feminist and "halfie" anthropology (1991), I am not offering this information as a way of claiming a superior moral stance or advantage in gathering 'more authentic' ethnographic material due to my positionality. Rather, I point this out as a way of speaking about how my own history and personal background helped to position me in the eyes of my interlocutors as the member of a geographical and cultural space that shared certain commonalities with the wider Mediterranean and Middle Eastern region; a position which frequently facilitated my access to families and individuals during fieldwork.

Methodological approaches

One of the core concerns of my project has been to understand how struggles for material wellbeing are deeply enmeshed with the production of a particular 'sense of place' and

[18] For a short overview of the history of bilateral cultural relationships between Romania and Morocco see http://rabat.mae.ro/node/221

collective belonging (Feld and Basso 1996). Drawing on existing literature from political geography I found it useful to think of the post-colonial city as potentially "wounded" as a result of colonial intervention and structural violence in the post-independence era (Till 2012: 6). By adopting this conceptual frame, anthropologists can shift the focus from land and buildings as property to place as a historically ongoing event invested with affect, as well as shifting and contingent meanings (cf. Navaro-Yashin 2012). Moreover, Karen Till proposes that beyond attending to the body and the senses, researchers must also attend to the psychological wounds caused by exclusion and marginalization through an ethics of care that develops appropriate methods for attending to the inhabitants of these places as "ordinary", not "other" (2012: 5, 12). Combining this approach with a phenomenological focus, the primary method I have used for answering my research questions was that of emplaced, active participant observation. In using these terms I take my cue from Sarah Pink who stresses the significance of acknowledging that ethnographic fieldwork is a deeply sensorial experience (2009). Pink suggests that in thinking of ourselves as "sensory apprentices" rather than detached observers, and by attending to both our senses as researchers and those of our collaborators, we are better suited to "learn to know", as our collaborators "know through embodied practice" (2009: 70). Here I would like to draw on the recent work of Karen Nakamura (2013), and emphasise the distinction between an "aesthetic-sensual form of sensory ethnography" (ibid: 133) – akin to Sarah Pink's "mediated sensory ethnography" (2015) – and what Nakamura calls "the multi-sensory experiential" (ibid: 134). The former has been predominantly embodied by a particular genre of ethnographic film- and sound-making (cf. Castaign-Taylor 2012, Spray 2007, 2011), while the latter has been more frequently approached as a methodological tool. In this dissertation I have drawn on the latter as both a methodological and epistemological device during the fieldwork phase and in the analysis of the gathered material. This does not, mean that the resulting work is a sensory ethnography, but rather that I have attempted – following the call of Paul Stoller (1989) – to stay attuned to the ways in which daily experiences of taste, vision, hearing, tactile sensations and emotional states influenced my access to the particular types of affect expressed my closest interlocutors as well as my physical capacities to observe and participate during fieldwork.

My field research was therefore structured into several approaches. Principally, I conducted participant observation alongside my closest interlocutors of their everyday lives, routines, and practices. This entailed being present for both mundane and

exceptional life events; taking part in the preparation and consumption of meals; taking walks both inside and outside the neighbourhood; going on shopping errands and documenting the consumption patterns and budgeting techniques of several households (principally Amina's and Asma's, with less extensive observations alongside several other female research participants). While a majority of the statements I cite by my interlocutors were made during casual everyday conversations, I also recorded seven family histories, notably with my closest interlocutors such as Asma, Amina, Hind (Ch. 6), Fatima (Ch. 5), Hicham (Ch. 3), and several older male members of the community such as Si Mohammad and Mr. Abdeljalil Bakkar who are mentioned in the next chapters. I set out to record these family histories as a way of gaining a better understanding of the personal and social context that my main interlocutors had developed in, and the way in which it intersected with local histories and events as well as the physical spaces of the neighbourhood. This material is complemented with data gathered through a series of multi-media methodologies on which I expand below.

Placing at the centre of my ethnographic inquiry the everyday lives of a socially and economically marginalized community has entailed the difficult exploration of lives often marked by harrowing economic concerns, political and historical trauma, and personal hardship. Finding the right space and manner for speaking to my close informants about the messy and rapidly shifting contingency of everyday life pushed me to consider alternative methodological approaches. Some of these approaches like embodied ways of gaining knowledge through walking and sharing of meals (Stoller 1989, Sutton 2001) and the results they yielded are directly addressed in the dissertation. Others, such as a "photovoice" exercise (Wang and Burris 1997) and an ambient sound-recording experiment (cf. Feld 2005) I conducted with a small group of inhabitants provided background material for my analysis and helped me become attuned to how my interlocutors perceived of the area's sensorial landscape, but are not specifically analysed in the text. While I present and address these approaches separately here, they undoubtedly overlapped and fed off each other in the same manner that our sensorial knowledge of the world is synesthetic (Seremetakis 1994).

As mentioned earlier, analyses of Casablanca have been predominantly focused on the visual, subject to what might still be called the "scopic regime of modernity" (Jay 1998), and concerned themselves primarily with the semiotic potential of these representations (cf. Ossman 1994, Pieprzak 2010). In order to balance out this focus on

semiotics I developed a methodological approach for unpacking the iconic and romanticised image of the city.

In my attempt to interrogate existing representations of Casablanca and Hay Mohammadi's heritage I was inspired by Sherry Turkle's work with objects (2007), which led me to stage encounters between the inhabitants and visual representations of their homes and neighbourhood as they appeared in the international media. As part of these staged encounters I brought along on visits to my friends in the neighbourhood copies of the images that were used in international media and heritage circles to depict Hay Mohammadi. Although I had also initially considered the option of "photo-elicitation" – asking my key interlocutors to show me their own photos of the neighbourhood – without my prompting, several of those I came to know and spend considerable amounts of time with frequently offered to show me photo albums and videos of themselves and their families, dating back to their childhood and youth in the area (cf. Harper 2002, Daniels 2010). These occasions provided me with an intimate glimpse into the lives of my interlocutors, and often led to discussions about how the social and material fabric of the neighbourhood had changed, or intricate family histories that might not have become conversation topics otherwise. Other materials, such as official maps and urban plans, colonial photographs and recent mass media coverage of the neighbourhood that I gathered provided me with a crucial historical perspective on Hay Mohammadi. However, as part of a collaborative process of "media archaeology of place" (Huhtamo 2011), these materials also acted as catalysts for conversations about local identities, social memory of place and its transformation over time, disrupting and diversifying the narratives I encountered in official accounts and scholarly work on the area, something that I address squarely in Chapter 2 (Turkle 2007: 5).

Among the most circulated representations of my research site, colonial maps ranked second only to archival photographs, which, owing to a growing presence of new technologies and Internet literacy has meant their availability to a greater public. Although mapping and map-making have mostly been associated with colonial technocratic efforts at controlling space and the beings that lived in it (Scott 1998, Foucault 1984: 239), as part of my data collection process I explored the possibility of employing map-making as a creative, comparative exercise (Patel and Baptist 2012). While maps have generally been construed and employed as objective representations of a territory surveyed, my purpose has been to encourage my interlocutors from Hay Mohammadi to think of collaborative

cartographies as a creative exercise that stresses the process over the finished product, as well as encouraging imaginary and non-representational mapping (Corner 1999). Following the work of Cristina Grasseni (2004, 2009), I conceived of collaborative map-making as a way of capturing and analysing a diverse range of "skilled visions" rooted in the local landscape and generated through the cognitive and bodily practices of everyday dwelling in the neighbourhood (cf. Grasseni 2012: 98). Map-making and drawing were thus used to document the specific cognitive ways in which the topography of this historically significant neighbourhood was personified, and answer the questions posed by the research with regards to how place was made meaningful or meaningless for the inhabitants of Hay Mohammadi. This material was also used to spark conversations about the neighbourhood and its spaces, providing a conduit for people to express their sense of emplacement and sometimes of exclusion, as Chapter 2 will discuss (cf. Kumar 2008).

These multi-layered cartographic representations together with the material gathered through participant-observation have allowed me to access a richly textured experience of the palimpsestic nature of the neighbourhood's fabric and the lives it sustains (cf. Pandolfo 1996, Huyssen 2003). Complementing this ethnographic material are archival and historical sources as well as formal interviews with architects, urban planners, and local officials who in their professional capacity were concerned with or worked in Hay Mohammadi, either in the past or at the time of my research. Last but not least, the everyday practice of "sensuous scholarship" – to borrow from Paul Stoller (1997: 43) – alongside my closest informants, as we shared meals, words, walks, sights and sounds, allowed me to directly participate in and experience the sensory worlds of my interlocutors. As such, my methodological approach overwhelmingly tried to address a concern with (mundane) practice and its role in the production of knowledge, through movement and in other ways that are nonverbal.

Dissertation structure

The history and socio-economic identity of the Moroccan urban margins have been either ignored or instrumentally deployed through partial or hegemonic representations by various actors – something I argue has led to the normative understanding of poverty, marginality and agency. In response to this, in this dissertation I have tried to structure the ethnographic material and its attendant analysis in a way that attempts to do justice to the contingent and contested nature, as well as multiple facets of life for those inhabiting the

neighbourhood of Hay Mohammadi. As such, the six chapters of this dissertation, followed by a conclusion, invite the reader on a multi-scalar exploration, analysis and discussion of the ethnographic material, moving through a succession of conceptual as well as physical spaces. I therefore begin with the 'historical space' of the neighbourhood's creation, and continue with the cartographic representations of that space. I then descend into the physical space of the street and the *derb* (small quarter), advancing into the 'alternative' space of neighbourhood NGOs, entering the intimate space of the home and the ritual time-space of Ramadan, and finally concluding with a broadened view onto the new slum-resettlement neighbourhoods of Casablanca and the envisioned urban spaces of the future.

The first chapter thus opens with a crucial ethno-historical exploration of the social, political and economic processes that led to the construction of Hay Mohammadi as both a physical as well as a social space. This chapter charts in detail the colonial experimentation with housing and urban planning for a rapidly growing population of industrial workers, and the events that shaped the neighbourhood's trajectory as part of national and local politics. Blending historical information with autobiographical material provided by a number of inhabitants, I reconstruct the timeline of political violence and trauma experienced by the neighbourhood in the post-independence era and link it to recent events that inhabitants considered to be contributing factors to Hay Mohammadi's ongoing marginalization. By further examining the emergence and intersection of commemorative and heritage discourses with local political agendas, I explore some of the continuities and discontinuities with the colonial era and their effects on the built environment, as well as the local social fabric of Hay Mohammadi.

Chapter 2 advances the discussion started in Chapter 1 on heritage, urban governance and the politics of commemoration by looking at the role of various mapping acts in the production of representations of neighbourhood space. The ethnographic material in this chapter attends to how these various representations of Hay Mohammadi space have come into being, and follows some of the uses and trajectories they have opened up for other mappings of the neighbourhood (Appadurai 1986). If space and its representation are symptomatic of the power relationships governing that space, I ask what can be uncovered by considering how the space of a marginalized neighbourhood has been and continues to be mapped. I compare these cartographic representations with maps drawn by my interlocutors as part of the cognitive mapping exercise detailed in the

methodology section, and suggest that such individual cartographies serve as points of departure in understanding the lived experience of those inhabiting the neighbourhood at present.

Chapter 3 transitions from the map into the street, and explores the political and economic (co)production of social space through the lens of street practices in Hay Mohammadi. As such, this chapter extends the investigation into the production of marginal space and class structures by looking at the everyday experience of people in Hay Mohammadi. Inspired by Farha Ghannam's recent work in Cairo (2013), I explore the conceptual usefulness of the "institutionalisation of liminality" (Turner 1969) for a discussion of the ongoing sense of economic insecurity on the urban margins. The chapter is especially concerned with the social and economic practices developed by inhabitants in response to this situation, as well as the quotidian and seasonal rhythms associated with these practices that informed the identity of Hay Mohammadi as a *sha'abi* (working-class) neighbourhood.

If the street and the particular forms of sociality and gendered identities it co-produces are increasingly being vilified by local elites and representatives of the state, what sort of spaces, both physical as well as conceptual, are available as alternatives? Who are the stakeholders that validate these alternatives and what is their impact on the local inhabitants? Chapter 4 tackles these questions by taking the reader into the political, social and physical spaces opened up by 'third sector' actors in the wake of the neoliberal decentralization and paradoxical re-territorialization of the state on the urban margins. In this chapter, I pay particular attention to the growing number of NGOs in the neighbourhood during the past decade, the role of both national as well as international actors in that process, and their focus on social development programmes targeted at youth. This allows me to trace the emergence of a new hegemonic set of discourses and practices, which result, I argue, in the growing depoliticizing of poverty and marginality in Morocco. By focusing on one particularly dramatic moment that occurred during my fieldwork, I suggest that such practices are essentially struggles over the social construction and policing of the 'proper young man' through the strategic deployment of visual representations as well as what Didier Fassin has called "petty states of emergency" (2014).

Switching the focus towards the private sphere, in Chapter 5 I consider the role of domestic space and everyday labour required for securing livelihoods in the context of

Hay Mohammadi. With the help of Amina, I provide a detailed account of her home-making rituals and routines as a way of illuminating questions about how home-making practices and domestic activities mediated processes of gender and class formation in precarious economic conditions. By unpacking the multiple meanings and social uses of the local term *hadga* as a marker for the gendered, skilful and intensely laborious work entailed in maintaining a household, I show how women in difficult socio-economic situations were forced to develop alternative means of securing both present as well as future wellbeing and security through the production of a locally valuable form of symbolic capital. Drawing on the work of Clara Han (2012) and Veena Das (2008), through a close account of Amina's struggles I explore how giving and receiving care on the margins of Casablanca were ambivalently constituted acts inscribed in a context of historical trauma and chronic economic insecurity. Focusing on the particularly taxing circumstances of Amina's home life, I discuss the ways in which the development of skilled routines also served as a necessary mechanism through which ambivalent or negative affects associated with her home and quarter could be kept in check, allowing her to momentarily achieve a sense of wellbeing (cf. Navaro-Yashin 2012).

Extending the preoccupation with domestic spaces, Chapter 6 focuses on the visions of the future as embodied in new housing development plans and billboards, and describes some of the real and imagined spaces they open up for the inhabitants of Casablanca's margins. This final chapter also furthers the discussion of home spaces and their centrality in the struggle for dignified life on the margins of Casablanca. Drawing on the in-depth material provided by one of the former inhabitants of the old *karyane*, I present a detailed account of the relocation project targeting the remaining slum inhabitants in Hay Mohammadi, and suggest that through such re-housing programmes the state was in fact effectively re-marginalising the poor, both in geographical as well as social and economic ways. Stemming from this are questions about mobilities and the future, which I address through an analysis of new spaces of consumption and infrastructure projects meant to re-imagine Casablanca as a world-class city. I argue that the new tramway line that was inaugurated around the time of my fieldwork worked to prefigure what I describe as the hypermodern future the Moroccan state envisioned for its largest city. However, through a careful examination of the ways in which the tramway aimed to supplant vernacular modes of travel as well as the rich gestural economies of the urban periphery, I suggest that the tramway was ambivalently received by my

interlocutors. What is more, signs that this new infrastructure might foster a more socially integrated city were met with resistance by certain members of the elite, underscoring the city's enduring social fragmentation. Finally, in the conclusion I close by drawing together the main themes of the dissertation and suggest some new questions and directions for urban anthropology in the region.

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Chapter 1 | Historicizing marginality

"*No one, wise Kuublai, knows better than you that the city must never be confused with the words that describe it*."

Italo Calvino, *Invisible Cities*

One afternoon in late October 2013 I was having coffee with Meryem at *Paul*, in the Maarif neighbourhood of Casablanca. Having originally sprung to life in 1911 as the quarter housing Spanish and Tunisian-Italian labourer migrants, Maarif has acquired a reputation as one of the most affluent and 'modern' parts of the city in recent decades.. Nowadays the neighbourhood is part of the Anfa prefecture, a name synonymous with exclusivity and wealth, boasting some of the most expensive real estate in Africa, and housing luxury facilities such as the Royal Golf Course (Cohen and Eleb 2002). In her late twenties, Meryem was studying to become a graphic designer and had recently become involved with a heritage and commemoration project tackling Hay Mohammadi's history of state violence. Eager to learn about her work, I had asked Meryem if she would like to talk more over coffee. She had proposed that we meet in front of the unfortunately named Twin Towers, a pair of skyscrapers that signalled the area's claim to a flashy, aggressively Western modernity.[19] International brand names loomed over the busy intersection as I waited for Meryem to arrive by taxi. Although our final destination was within walking distance, we were soon seated in another taxi, which deposited us only moments later outside the luxurious entrance of the Villa Zevaco.[20]

As we sat in the breezy, lush garden of what I had been told by many is an 'art deco jewel', I confessed to Meryem I had never been there before. Looking at the carefully curated menu of what was otherwise a French chain of coffee shops, I found the price of a simple espresso on par with an upscale European restaurant. All around us sat people in carefully styled outfits, exuding the relaxed self-assuredness of the extremely

[19] The two towers were inaugurated in 1998 and were described by their architect, Riccardo Boffil, as a "blend of modernity and tradition inspired by modern, Islamic and Andalusian architecture drawing on landmarks such as the Giralda in Seville, the Koutoubia (mosque) in Marrakech and the Tour Hassan in Rabat"; see *Le Journal* (18 to 24 May 1998, p. 13.). At the time of my fieldwork one of the towers housed offices while the other functioned as a high-end hotel.

[20] The Villa Zevaco is eponymous with its architect, the late Jean-François Zevaco who was commissioned by the local industrialist Sami Suissa to build a three-bedroom house in 1947 (Cohen and Eleb 2002: 399).

well-off and carefree. Meryem, visibly amused by my confession, retorted in French: "There are plenty of beautiful places in Casablanca (*plein des endroits jolies*). You should get out more and visit them. If you spend all your time in Hay Mohammadi you will end up thinking all of Morocco looks like that!" And, as she gave an abrupt laugh, her face seemed to register real concern. Intrigued, I asked her which places she had in mind. "Well there are many! For example, the *Corniche,*[21] or, have you been to La Bodega?"[22] But after a short pause she seemed to be struggling to find more examples. "You should come out with me sometime", she finally offered and I thanked her for the invitation.

Although I was already aware at the outset of my fieldwork of the general ill fame of Hay Mohammadi and was often greeted with disparaging opinions of the neighbourhood, Meryem's comment struck me at the time, and I often returned to it in order to try and unpack the roots of the discursive production of Hay Mohammadi's undesirability. What are the historical conditions that continue to contribute to the perception of Hay Mohammadi as the emblem of a criminalized Moroccan urban periphery? And what was at stake in the potential misrecognition suggested by Meryem? This chapter tries to address these questions by reconstructing the particular historical context for the neighbourhood's creation and later degradation. I will show how due to a toxic blend of political and historical circumstances, Moroccan working class, *sha'abi* urban spaces were indeed increasingly resembling Hay Mohammadi.

In what follows, I begin by considering the structural forces that impacted the production of Hay Mohammadi as a geographically as well as a socially marginal, maligned area. In order to understand the nature of current spatial dynamics in Casablanca, I argue that a greater preoccupation with history is needed. For this reason I open with a foray into Morocco's past to a moment when French colonial policy began a reordering of time and space to serve the interests of those in power. By charting both the physical construction and discursive production of this site since the early days of the French Protectorate in Morocco, I intend to show how the development of marginality was not an arbitrary process but a crucial component of a politically motivated agenda of social engineering, albeit with unintended consequences at times (cf. Scott 1998, Harvey 2009).

[21] The word '*corniche*' was commonly used as shorthand for the beachfront promenade that stretches for 10 km on the south-western edge of Casablanca, occasionally conflated with Anfa, one of its wealthiest and most luxurious neighbourhoods.
[22] A Spanish tapas restaurant that occasionally organised salsa dancing.

Furthermore, by recreating the timeline of Hay Mohammadi's emergence, the material in this chapter will show that the post-colonial Moroccan state not only inherited the colonial organization of urban space, but also did little to develop local tools for urban planning and governance. Seeing the margins as a dangerous threat to political and social order, the state's stance towards these areas, while at times ambivalent and lacking a clear direction, was constantly framed in terms of security and control. This is not to say that Casablanca and Hay Mohammadi in particular are the static materialisation of malignant ideologies or that they are the benign terrain upon which political forces sought to enforce their power. Rather, my argument in this opening chapter is that the space of the urban margins and its governance exist in a dialectical relationship, whose balance has encountered shifts and transformations over the course of time as a consequence of historical, political and economic forces (Lefebvre 2005, Soja 2000). A close analysis of this dialectical relationship will serve to show how social order and the organization of urban space co-produced and reinforced one another on the margins of Casablanca. As such, the first two sections are concerned with the historical and political context of Hay Mohammadi's birth as a marginal and criminalized place, while the final part looks at the emergence of heritage and commemorative practices, and their strategic appropriation of colonial and post-colonial inheritance as part of a process whose broadly defined purpose is the socio-cultural re-integration of the neighbourhood into the larger urban fabric.

Colonial beginnings

Writing about the project and invention of French modern "norms and forms" more generally, Paul Rabinow has argued that the creation of Casablanca is synonymous with the first comprehensive experiment in urban planning as a way of engineering 'New Man' (1989, 1992: 54-55). Arriving in 1906-07 to 'pacify' the locals and establish a commercial colony, the French quickly established a firm presence and began to re-order what they saw as the haphazard state of affairs.[23] Due to its favourable position on the Atlantic coast, the once sleepy fishing village of Anfa – later renamed Casablanca – soon became the commercial hub of colonial Morocco.[24] Of a mind that "a construction site is worth a

[23] See Abdallah Laroui (1979) for a detailed discussion of the history of French colonialism in Morocco.
[24] Historically, this position had been held by the imperial city of Marrakech, built around and expanded due to its nodal position on one of the major trans-Saharan trade routes. Emily Gottreich's book on the Jewish quarter of Marrakech provides a thorough description of the city's relation to trade and trade routes (2007: 111).

battalion,"[25] as early as 1914 the charismatic Hubert Lyautey, the first Governor of Morocco, assigned Henri Prost the task of designing a comprehensive urban development plan (Wright 1991: 99). Upon arriving in Casablanca, Prost's first impressions were of an "unbelievable chaos," causing him and many others to liken the city to a Wild West, where rampant speculation was already avidly consuming every available plot of land (ibid: 100). The following year, Prost had produced the first comprehensive urban plan. It proposed a spatial division of Casablanca along an east-west corridor designating the north-eastern parts that would later become Hay Mohammadi exclusively for industry, based on a study that showed the prevailing winds blowing the factory smoke away from the lush residential area that would come to hug the beaches of the current day neighbourhoods of Anfa and Ain Diab to the west (Wright 1991: 87).

Beyond organizing the city based on these functional principles, Prost went on to create the dual city for which the French became famous in Morocco (Abu-Lughod 1980). This scheme legitimized itself with the thin veneer of Orientalist views on zoning in Arab cities (Wright 1991: 137). Thus, the estates for 'Moroccan Muslims' would remain separated from those for 'Jews', as well as the new European quarters[26] – the famous *villes nouvelles* – by circular roads and wooded areas, which doubled as a buffer or *zone sanitaire.* In the eyes of the French administration in Morocco, which at the time reflected Lyautey's personal and political views, these measures were meant to reflect a respect for local norms and forms or life and its organization (ibid: 113). At the same time, Lyautey's plans were meant as a staunch criticism of French colonial town-planning as it had been implemented in Algeria, where local monuments had been destroyed and Algerian inhabitants had been forcibly removed and resettled in towns built by military engineers with little grasp of and interest in 'indigenous' ways of life (ibid: 92). Prost and his successors eventually had to contend with a diminished version of these buffer zones due to the lack of available land (ibid: 142). What needs emphasizing, however, is that beyond any aesthetic or hygienic agenda, this spatial organization was also meant to be riot-proof (Wright 1991: 113, Bogaert 2011). This strict zoning has been identified as the most striking manifestation of the segregation, or, in Janet Abu-Lughod's provocative term,

[25] Lyautey in Wright (1991). For a similar policy in a different colonial context see Bernard Cohn (1983: 165-209).

[26] The French architectural historians Jean-Luis Cohen and Monique Eleb (2002: 319) show how even at the time of the French Protectorate these categories were understood to be artificially assigned for administrative purposes and had limited applicability in the everyday lives of the city's inhabitants. Again, Gottreich, critical engages with this long-held view of ethnic segregation and shows how in practice such zoning was more complex and fluid (2007: 73).

"urban apartheid" implemented by the French in North Africa (Abu-Lughod 1980, cf. Celik 1997). It allotted the majority of available land to the colonizer and effectively fenced in the so-called 'indigenous' areas, causing serious overcrowding which persists to this day, particularly in the case of the old town cores in both Rabat and Casablanca (Sakib 2007).

Commonly referred to as the country's *poumon economique* (economic lung), largely owing to the extensive new harbour built in 1913 by the French, Casablanca urbanized at breath-taking speed in the following decades. Overall, Morocco's urban population increased by 232 per cent between 1930 and 1946, while the Protectorate's housing policies vis-à-vis Moroccans remained unchanged from the pre-war era (Écochard 1955: 38, Rabinow 1989: 303-305). Several factors contributed to the rural exodus that swelled urban populations during that period. The fast pace of industrialization and the large building projects started in Casablanca between 1926 and 1932 attracted large numbers of men from the country-side; the agrarian reforms imposed by the colonial administration led to the dispossession of many peasants, and the severe draughts of 1936 and 1937 amplified the already existing housing shortage by pushing destitute migrants from rural areas to settle on the outskirts of Casablanca (cf. Kaioua 1996: 73-74). As a consequence, by the 1950s the city's edges were becoming a growing mar on the Protectorate's commercial capital. In Casablanca, the increasing numbers of rural migrants had been expected to live either in the old walled city core (*medina)* or to rely on the insufficient housing provided by their industrialist employers.[27] In the absence of viable alternatives, the bulk of those who constituted what French sociologist Robert Montagne referred to as Morocco's "new proletariat" (1952) took up residence in more or less makeshift shelters in the immediate vicinity of their place of employment. For a large majority at that time, this meant the newly developed industrial district of *Carrières Centrales*, as Hay Mohammadi was known during the Protectorate period (1912-1956).

With the steady growth of this industrial quarter, its inhabitants began to voice demands for social and economic rights on par with the European workers. The first labour unions were created in *Carrières Centrales,* and soon began to mobilize Moroccan workers, framing their initial demands in terms of economic and housing concerns (Rachik 2002: 29). Confronted with impending social and political unrest, the French

[27] An exception to this is for example the Lafarge cement company corporate worker housing, built before 1939 by Edmond Brion. See Cohen and Eleb (2002: 321).

administration began to approach urban planning as an urgent security measure.[28] It was in this context that Prost's eventual successor,[29] Michel Écochard, who was named the head of the S*ervice de l'Urbanisme* (Urban Planning Service) in 1947, began to devise a plan for providing Moroccans with affordable housing (*habitat pour le plus grand nombre)*. Until that point, the strategies used by the Protectorate's Urban planning division to deal with an increasing amount of informal housing oscillated between re-ordering the self-built homes on site (*restructuration*) and providing temporary re-housing (*relogement*) (Écochard 1955: 47).

Born in France at the turn of the twentieth century, Michel Écochard was a prolific architect and urban planner, practicing in places like Senegal, Pakistan and Syria, both before and after his Moroccan post. His life and work have been the subject of several studies, the most recent of which argues that Écochard was a representative figure of a new class of international 'urban experts' that was formed on the African continent between the 1950s and 1970s (Avermaete 2010a). During his brief tenure, from 1947 until 1953, Écochard experimented with a new approach to urban planning that led to the large-scale creation of new housing estates based on a standard 8x8 meter *trame* (or grid), whose conceptual and practical significance will be discussed in more depth in the next chapter (cf. Cohen and Eleb 2002: 319).

For now it is important to note that Écochard's grid paved the way for a whole wave of architectural experiments with housing at the *Carrières Centrales* site. Already at the time praised as a "laboratory for modernity" (Rabinow 1989), the area came to house some of the most emblematic buildings of what architectural historian Tom Avermaete has termed "another modernism" (2005). Defined in contrast to the universalist agenda of high modernism – represented at the time most notably by the works of Le Corbusier – the new wave took as its inspiration not only 'traditional' North African built forms, but also the messy, contingent shapes of temporary structures such as *bidonvilles* (Celik 2005, Avermaete 2005). Écochard was soon joined by a group of enthusiastic, young European

[28] Resident General Guillaume addressed the governmental council in 1953, stressing the importance of implementing an urgent housing plan: "*On va au plus pressé et le plus pressé, c'est la suppression des bidonvilles, après on verra. […] On construira des logements aussi simples que possibles, le moins coûteux possible et le plus vite possible*." (We are going to the most urgent [issue] and most pressing is slum clearance, then we will see. We will built housing that is as simple as possible, the least costly possible and as quickly as possible.) In *Conseil du gouvernement, section marocaine*. Résidence générale du Maroc, meeting on June 30, July 1st and 2nd. Rabat, 1953.

[29] There were several other directors of the Urban Service before Écochard took up the post. However, they did not leave their personal mark on the city in the same way. See Cohen and Eleb (2002: 280-284).

architects – who would later form GAMMA (Group of Modern Moroccan Architects).[30] Using methods inspired by the long tradition of ethnological research in the French colonies,[31] the architects studied not only built forms but also the organization of life in the shanties surrounding Casablanca (Avermaete 2010b). An *atelier ambulant* (mobile unit) composed of an engineer, a topographer, an urban designer and two draughtsmen conducted interviews and surveyed the needs of the "new proletariat" living in "indigenous settlements," the latter a euphemism used to refer to the self-built shacks (Celik 2005: 277). Drawing on these findings, as well as the enduring forms of the Andalusian patio and the fortified mudbrick *kasbahs*[32] of the Sahara, GAMMA designed and built several experimental housing units for "Muslim" workers on the margins of Casablanca. These designs sought to demonstrate the role so-called indigenous dwelling practices could play in developing a more culturally adapted and thus "humane architectural methodology" (Chaouni 2011: 63, Smithson 1968).

The first high-rise housing complex built for "Muslims" best exemplifies this approach (Cohen and Eleb 2002). Composed of three apartment buildings, the complex is to this day surrounded by Écochard's 8x8 grid of houses. A high-rise simply called *La Tour* (the tower) is flanked by the *Semiramis* and *Nid D'Abeille* (beehive) buildings that stretch lengthwise. Visually, as its name might suggest, the Nid D'Abeille is the more striking of the two buildings as they appear in a photograph taken upon their completion in 1952 (Fig. 1). The first impression is that of looking at a cardboard model, which rhythmically repeats a giant pattern of rectangular shapes jutting out of the surface of the building. The viewer has to struggle for a sense of scale; only by looking at photographs taken from a different angle does it becomes obvious that the odd geometric pattern is made up of suspended patios with high walls meant to shield the owners from an outside gaze (Fig. 2). Originally intended as homage to the enduring forms of the desert *kasbah*, these small apartments were interpreted by some as caricatures of an invented and misappropriated tradition, as many of the eventual occupants came from dissimilar regional backgrounds (Chaouni 2011: 67).

[30] GAMMA was founded in July 1951 at the 8th *Congrès International des Architectes Modernes* (CIAM) in Hoddesdon. GAMMA members attended all congress meetings until the last one in Otterlo in 1959. See Eric Mumford (2000).

[31] For a detailed historical account and analysis of the use of ethnographic methods as part of the French colonial enterprise see Edmund Burke III's For a French perspective on the same see Robert Montagne (1952) and André Adam (1968).

[32] A *kasbah* is a fortified citadel, commonly built from mudbricks, found in Morocco's Middle- and Anti-Atlas regions.

Moreover, although this new, experimental project was meant to blur the lines between rural and urban, traditional and modern, it maintained the paternalist views on ethnic segregation instituted by the Prost plan. By designating the housing estates at *Carrières Centrales* for 'Moroccan Muslims' alone, Écochard's approach exacerbated over time the very conditions it sought to change. Despite all this, the project was hailed at the time as the perfect marriage between culturally specific dwelling (*habitat adapté*) and technocratic efforts at managing the increasing population of migrants to the city (Alison and Peter Smithson 1955). Seduced by the formal qualities as well as the conceptual framework of the *Carrières Centrales* project, Écochard's team, as well as the architectural community as a whole, neglected to critically engage with the contribution of colonial forces to the existence of slums (ibid.).

Even though the project essentially addressed problems created by the disruptive forces of colonialism, both Écochard and other French architects remained silent on the topic of the political implications that their work had in Morocco. For this reason, on the eve of independence movements across Africa, the famous British architect and fellow TEAM 10 member, Alison Smithson could claim that in North Africa, where there was plenty of "*espace et soleil*" (space and sun), one could see the emergence of a "modern France, full of hope" (Smithson 1991: 12).

Figure 1. The first high-rise buildings for 'Muslims'. From left to right: *Nid d'Abeille, Semiramis*, *La Tour*. 1952, Hay Mohammadi. From the archives of the Ecole Nationale d'Architecture, Rabat.

Figure 2. An elevated perspective of *Nid d'Abeille* upon its completion in 1952. Source: Casamémoire.

As if to dispel this reverie, the same year that the *Carrières Centrales* buildings were completed, Casablanca was gripped by violent riots following the killing of the Tunisian labour leader Ferhat Hached (Adam 1968: 540). Newspapers from the period name the neighbourhood as the theatre for bloody struggles, citing 'terrorist attacks' and 'acts of sabotage' on factories at *Carrières Centrales* (Spillman 1967: 159, 175). Thus, the neighbourhood joined other cities where anti-colonial struggles were already taking place (i.e. Fes, the industrial region of Khouribga), becoming one of the focal points from where riots spread across the country, eventually culminating with a negotiated independence from France in 1956 (Storm 2008, Takki 2012, Miller 2013).[33] Similar to other French African protectorates, the proclamation of independence mostly meant the paced devolution of administrative powers to the 'indigenous' population and did not constitute either a historical or a political break with the past.[34]

Significantly, this meant that contrary to Algeria's post-independence relationship with France, Morocco's break with the métropole was less brusque, notably where urban planning and social geographies were concerned (Chaouni 2011). Just as local topography saw the replacing of French place names with Moroccan ones, the Moroccan elites

[33] For an in-depth look at Moroccan political history see Abdellah Laroui's comprehensive study of political structures since pre-colonial times (1979).
[34] Unlike Algeria, where the independence struggle led to a prolonged and violent war (Stora 1993), Morocco's negotiation for and proclamation of independence from France was considerably less bloody. For a look at the different nature and impact of independence movements in North Africa see Charles-André Julien (2002).

replaced the French, and new social categories appropriated the structure of colonial ethnic distinctions. Aided by state-led economic measures aimed at creating a new administrative and middle class, members of the Moroccan economic and intellectual elites began to move into the quarters that had initially housed the French, appropriating the villas and status of those who left (Cohen 2004: 44-48). The newly independent working class continued to struggle with insufficient housing and precarious employment in neighbourhoods like *Carrières Centrales* – renamed Hay Mohammadi in honour of the country's monarch, Mohammad V, upon his return from exile. On a geographical level, this meant that the very margins that had fought for national independence were soon plunged back into a struggle for social and economic rights (Cohen and Jaidi 2006). The situation worsened not only for the urban poor but also for the lower-middle classes over the following decades, prompting the rise of several contestation movements and their consequently swift and brutal repression. In this dynamic, whose evolution I trace in the following section, the techniques and tools of urban planning and governance created by the French proved useful to Mohammad V's increasingly authoritarian successor, King Hassan II. Tracing the continuities between the colonial and post-independence era is thus crucial for understanding the factors that affected the development of Casablanca's margins into a synonym for poverty, violence and criminality.

The oil and financial crises of the 1970s and repeated droughts in the 1980s further led to another rural exodus and a second wave of growth in all major Moroccan urban centres (Catin et al. 2007). Precarious lives materialized into increasingly precarious neighbourhoods, and, as a consequence, Morocco's urban margins did in fact begin to look increasingly like Hay Mohammadi. Aesthetically, this was also due to a combination of lax urban policy and straightforward design, which meant that Écochard's 8x8 matrix for providing affordable housing began to spread with immense success throughout Morocco, facilitating the emergence of a uniform appearance for low-income quarters (Rachik 2002, Chaouni 2011). The state's response to this growing state of socio-economic fragility, as we shall see in the next section, oscillated between silent absence and heavy-handed repression of communal demands (Rachik 2002, Bogaert 2011). The reproduction of the margins was thus constantly situated in a field of tension, in which the militarisation of urban governance began to play an increasingly central role.

‘Emergency Urbanism’ and the ‘Years of Lead’: a timeline of political and structural violence

Beginning with the 1965 student uprising and culminating with the 1981 ‘Bread Riots’, Casablanca and Hay Mohammadi in particular became once more the scene of violent clashes, this time with the post-colonial state. The same revolutionary spirit that had brought the labour unions of Hay Mohammadi to the forefront of the anti-colonial struggle led the inhabitants of the neighbourhood to voice their open contestation of the independent Moroccan state under King Hassan II. Taking the throne in 1961, the new monarch ushered in a period that culminated in what is now commonly referred to as the ‘Years of Lead’ (*Les Anées de Plomb*, 1975-1990), due to the unprecedented brutality with which all forms of dissent were repressed (Slyomovics 2005).

One year after taking the throne, Hassan II began consolidating his rule and drafted a constitution that would ensure that power remained in the hands of the monarchy. These actions, together with the king’s foreign policy that essentially proclaimed hostility towards the newly independent Algerian socialist state, led to a growing contestation movement organized around the *Union nationale des forces populaires* (National Union of Popular Forces, UNFP), under the leadership of Mehdi Ben Barka.[35] The UNFP was joined by the *Union nationale des étudiants du Maroc* (National Union of Moroccan Students, UNEP), which led to the quick escalation of the conflict between the monarch and the opposition (Miller 2013). Within this context, the 1965 student riots signified a crucial turning point in the history of Hassan II’s regime, as they marked the conclusive emergence of a state policy of repressive violence. Sparked by a new education regulation that was meant to limit the access of an estimated 60 per cent of high school students to a Baccalaureate degree, and thus a commonly perceived lifeline out of poverty and into the middle-class, the 1965 student riots began with school strikes and sit-ins and ended in city-wide riots that brought together labourers, *bidonville* dwellers and students, later violently repressed by the regime with the help of the army.[36] Casablanca and the inhabitants of its urban margins found themselves once again at the forefront of socio-

[35] Mehdi Ben Barka continues to act as a mythical figure for the Moroccan Left, particularly after his unexplained disappearance in 1965 while in France, where King Hassan II had exiled him to in 1963 because of Ben Barka’s call to Moroccans to oppose the war with Algeria over a border dispute (see Farsoun and Paul 1976).

[36] General Mohammad Oufkir, acting as Hassan II’s right hand in matters of state security, led the repression of the student riot. Rollinde (2003: 123) reports that the repression effort was instantaneous, claiming that Oufkir himself shot on the rioting crowd from his helicopter, while military tanks rolled over the protesters.

economic struggles, but on this occasion their actions signalled the emerging cracks in the nationalist project (Rollinde 2003).

Historian Susan Gilson Miller interprets Hassan II's response to this early contestation as a strategic measure of "an untried" monarch consolidating his grip on power and instilling fear in the opposition (2013: 168-169). As a consequence, security concerns came to overwhelmingly define the post-colonial state's approach to governing peripheral areas like Hay Mohammadi. Reforms of existing urban governance were undertaken only when prompted by violent outbursts from the city's margins. In this sense, the 1965 student riots in Casablanca reminded the Moroccan state of the crucial importance of the urban fringe. However, during a period in which "a good repression" was seen to buy "ten years of social peace",[37] the state's response continued to be ad hoc, followed by a resumption of "management by absence" rather than a comprehensive urban strategy (cf. Zaki 2008, Bogaert 2011).

This situation reached a turning point in 1981. Under pressure from the International Monetary Fund, the Moroccan government lifted food subsidies on all vital goods in May that year, causing the price of bread to increase by 40 per cent.[38] In response, the two main labour unions – the Moroccan Labour Union (UMT) and the Democratic Labour Confederation (CDT) – called for a nation-wide strike on June 20th 1981. Casablanca's margins erupted in riots once more, which the state later used as a justification for the deployment of armed forces (Clement 1992). The government's reaction was heavy-handed, sending in the army who then opened fire on hundreds of protesters.[39] In Hay Mohammadi, locals still remembered the sound of helicopters roaring overhead and the image of military tanks rolling down Ali Yaata Avenue. Sons and fathers disappeared into communal graves or secret detention centres.[40]

In the aftermath of this extreme violence, the state began to recognize the urgency of a new approach towards governing the urban margins (Rachik 2002). Still situated within a logic of control and security, the state's solution was defined by an attempt to territorialize its power by making it administratively as well as monumentally visible on the margins (Rachik 1995). The first step, enacted a month after the 1981 riots, divided

[37] See Clement's historical study of urban riots in Morocco (1992: 402) and Koen Bogaert's overview of urban governance approaches (2011).
[38] Reported in *Global Newswatch*, August 1981 (accessed on July 14th 2014).
[39] The Moroccan state reported 8000 arrests and 66 dead, while the protesters counted 1000 dead, among which 637 by gunshot (Daoud 1981).
[40] Reported by *Independent Online*, on December 11th 2005 (accessed on July 14th 2014).

Casablanca into five administrative units subordinate to a newly instated administrative superstructure: the *Wilaya* (governorate) of Greater Casablanca.[41] As the head of the new institution, the *Wali*, or Governor, was to be appointed by the King and to respond to the Interior Ministry alone, exerting greater power than locally elected officials.[42] While ultimate power was now concentrated in the hand of the *Wali,* the presence of the Moroccan state on the urban margins became embodied through an increased police presence and new, monumental prefectural offices.

King Hassan II entrusted the second aspect of his intervention to the French architect and urbanist Michel Pinceau. In Raffaele Cattedra's estimation, Pinceau and his team were given the explicit mandate to "securitize the city" by elaborating a new master plan outlining Casablanca's development over the next twenty years (2001: 130-1). Continuing the tradition of his predecessors, Pinceau's plan updated the technocratic provisions of Écochard's Plan for Casablanca, which had been used unaltered since Morocco had declared its independence from France. Referred to by its French name, the *Schema Directeur de l'Amenagement du Territoire* (SDAU) was defined by a Haussmannian preoccupation with control over mobility and governability of urban space (Cattedra 2001: 143). In 1984 the *Agence Urbaine de Casablanca* (Casablanca Urban Planning Agency) was created to implement the SDAU. Similar to the *Wilaya*, the Urban Planning Agency was put under the tutelage of the Interior Ministry and its director had the same status as the *Wali*.[43]

In this context, the *Agence Urbaine* became one of the chief tools for implementing the territorialization of the state's power in Casablanca (Cattedra 2001). New infrastructure and social housing projects built under the new master plan were seen as a way of disentangling the densely populated margins while keeping them at arm's length from the city core (Ossmann 1994: 30). One of the main provisions of the new plan, the extension of the road network, was promoted as upgrading of the existing network and a promise of increased mobility, but it also decreased the possibility for

[41] In 2015 Casablanca was administratively composed of sixteen *arrondissements* that were grouped under eight prefectures.
[42] The Interior Ministry is considered to be the institutional locus of the Monarchy's power. As a so-called sovereign ministry the King directly appoints its head regardless of results in the legislative election. This administrative reform was considered so successful that it was then replicated in other major Moroccan cities, counting a total of seventeen *Wilayas* today across the country.
[43] Similar to the institution of the *Wilaya*, the Urban Planning Agency model was replicated in several other large Moroccan cities. However, beginning in March 1998 all Urban Planning Agencies were put under the control of the new Ministry for Habitat, with the exception of the Casablanca Urban Planning Agency which to this day continues to be subordinate to the Interior Ministry (Rachik 2002).

spontaneous mobilisation of protests. The new wide avenues facilitated visibility of crowds and enabled policing. It is telling that the A3 highway linking Casablanca to the country's capital, Rabat, already under development during the late colonial era, was only completed in 1985. Initially planned by Écochard, the A3 now cuts Casablanca in two, separating the periphery from the centre with a six-lane wide, two meters deep trench. None of these projects, however, actually sought to address the root causes that sparked the violent contestation movements of 1981. Defined by their concern with the policing and control of potentially volatile populations, these planning measures came to epitomize what Moroccan sociologist Abderrahmane Rachik (2002) has termed the 'Emergency Urbanism' era.

During this period, increasing the state's visibility in peripheral neighbourhoods went hand in hand with technocratic tools of surveillance. There were two ways in which this visibility took shape in Hay Mohammadi. One was the building of palatial administrative branches on the periphery of Casablanca. Investing heavily in Pinceau's designs, the state erected two new prefectural buildings, one on the edge of Hay Mohammadi and a second in the more recent but equally destitute neighbourhood of Moulay Rachid. At the same time the state reinforced existing security infrastructure inherited from the French. In Hay Mohammadi this was represented by a military garrison that occupied 30 acres in the heart of the neighbourhood, rivalled in size only by the Hay Mohammadi *bidonville* or *karyane* as the locals referred to it. The more infamous and shadowy manifestation of this security apparatus was the secret underground detention centre of Derb Moulay Cheriff.

Beginning in the 1970s, union and student activists alike were forcefully disappeared and sent to secret detention centres across the country where they were either killed or held and tortured for years. While some of these prisons were located in remote desert areas such as the Tazmamart underground prison,[44] Hay Mohammadi came to house one of the most infamous urban detention centres in the country. As such, the Derb Moulay Cheriff commissariat embodies a particularly tenacious manifestation of the continuities linking post-colonial Morocco with its French protectorate era. Built by the

[44] Built in 1972 after the second failed coup against Hassan II, the Moroccan state thoroughly and repeatedly denied the existence of the Tazmamart prison and the human rights abuses that took place there until 1991. The prison initially housed the 58 officers involved in the coup and later other political dissidents as well. Several former inmates have authored books on their inhumane experiences during decades of detention. See for example Ali Bourequat's *In the Moroccan King's Secret Gardens* (1998) and Ahmed Marzouki's *Tazmamart: Cell No. 10* (2000).

French in the early 1950s for rounding up independence fighters, the commissariat was enlarged with underground cells and converted by the Moroccan regime into a chamber of terror for the forced disappearance and torture of political dissidents and student activists (Slyomovics 2012: 54). Militants were held mere feet away from residential quarters, while their gaolers lived in a modernist tower block above ground (El Bouih 2008, Slyomovics 2012, Takki 2012). Rooted in the neighbourhood, the state thus tried to enforce the political silencing and marginalization of a once vibrant community.

Fatna El Bouih was twenty-four when she was forcibly disappeared and taken with several other female activists to Derb Moulay Cheriff. Active in the student movement since her high-school years, El Bouih was incarcerated due to her membership in the outlawed Marxist group 'March 23'[45] and served five years in various prisons across Morocco. She is one of a number of well-known former detainees, having built her post-detention life around the causes that opposed her to Hassan II's regime. Her connection to Hay Mohammadi and Derb Moulay Cheriff remains strong, and in 2013 she was an active member of several organizations fighting for the rehabilitation of the area and the transformation of the former detention centre into a memory museum (cf. Slyomovics 2012). I met her on several occasions during my time in Casablanca and we spoke about the forces that led to the marginalization of Hay Mohammadi.

As we were sitting at a terrace on the wide-open United Nations square in downtown Casablanca one early morning, she told me:[46]

> "Do you know how many important, *muhimin* (famous*)* people were born in Hay Mohammadi? Hundreds. Judges who grew up in the *karyane* (slum), boxing champions, the TAS football team, journalists, activists and of course the famous Nass al Ghiwane folk band.[47] They [the State] did not like this spirit of these people rising up and criticizing power. Crushing bodies was not enough, they instituted *hissar* (siege), you understand? It was like they created an embargo on the *hay* (neighbourhood), marginalize it to punish the people."[48]

[45] The group was named after the 1965 student protest movement that had been violently repressed by Hassan II's regime.
[46] The square was one of the state's renovation projects during the 'Emergency Urbanism' era, meant to revitalize the city's core and attest to the richness of Casablanca. Its design, however, prevented public gatherings as several wide boulevards crisscrossed the square. See Rachik (1995).
[47] Nass Al Ghiwane are a musical group closely associated with the political contestation of the 1970s. Born in Hay Mohammadi the group became synonymous with a trance style that fused local Gnawa music with Western influences, and are often compared with bands such as Pink Floyd.
[48] Interview on March 25th 2013.

Other former militants I met in Hay Mohammadi who spoke of the 'ghettoization' of the neighbourhood during the height of Hassan II's repressive era echoed this view. Si Mohammad was another local former detainee who agreed with Fatna El Bouih's view. I met Si Mohammad on a late afternoon in February 2013. As one of the elders in Hay Mohammadi considered to have "important memories", he was brought to the local community centre by his friend, Professor Najib Takki, a professor of history at the Hassan II University in Casablanca whom I had met with the help of the neighbourhood *jam'iyya* (see Introduction). Si Mohammad grew up in Hay Mohammadi when it was still referred to as Karyane Centra`.[49] A fragile man in his eighties, he was also a former detainee of the Derb Moulay Cheriff detention centre, where he was taken for his activities as a left-leaning journalist during the sixties. Wearing his grey hair slightly longer than was customary, he constantly slipped into French as we began our conversation in darija.

"Do you know the *khofra* area?" he immediately asked me. After I admitted to my ignorance on the matter he launched into a description of the neighbourhood's topology on the eve of Morocco's independence.

> "Douar Ryad, Saad, Koudiat and so many more. Each pocket of the *karyane* was named after the origins of the *ouvriers* (Fr. workers) who first settled there. Dar Lamane[50] did not exist back then. That is where the *khofra* (quarry) used to be. Oh, this was a very important neighbourhood back then, founding place of the first Moroccan labour union, the place where all new technologies were first tested; the largest cement factory, and, *bien sûr* (of course), the birthplace of the word *bidonville*!"

He gave a short laugh and then went on to tell me the story of how the neighbourhood came to be known as the birthplace of the French term for slum: "A French journalist reporting on the pro-independence riots back in the fifties coined the term." The rest of his account continued in no particular chronological order, alighting at the important historical moments that have come to define Hay Mohammadi's identity as a mythical place in Morocco's history, such as the visit of Morocco's first post-independence king, Mohammad V returning from exile, which led to the neighbourhood's subsequent name change to Hay Mohammadi. After a brief silence I asked Si Mohammad to tell me about

[49] As I specify in the Introduction, in darija many French words have been appropriated and transformed through a process of Arabisation. Thus, Karyane Centra` and the shorthand *karyane* are a mispronunciation of *Carrière Centrale*.

[50] The name refers to a quarter of Hay Mohammadi that was only built in 1986 as part of the many schemes aimed at relocating the *karyane* population. Amongst locals it is famous for its spacious apartments, while to architects it represents the first Aga Khan award achieved by a Moroccan architect for a Moroccan project.

his experience of the post-independence period. “Those were dark days,” he said and then paused again for what seemed like a long time.

> “It was very different afterwards. That spirit was strangled out of the people. And now, look at this place today, no one does anything, they have no ideals. Before it was considered an honour to be able to say you come from Hay Mohammadi, now everyone thinks we are all thieves (*chefara*) who live like animals (*hayawanat)*.”

In effect the period of intense state repression known as the ‘Years of Lead’ and the ‘Emergency Urbanism’ era converged with the introduction of structural adjustment policies negotiated by the Moroccan state with the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank (Cohen 2004: 78). It is not my intention to elaborate on the political dimensions of market liberalization in Morocco, since other scholars of the region have already done this work (cf. Zartman 1987, Denoux and Mghraoui 1997). What is pertinent though, as Shana Cohen’s study of the adoption of this particular economic model has shown, is that the liberalization of the Moroccan economy acted as a catalyst for the formation of new social orders (2004: 73-80). In her estimation, the slow pace at which these reforms were implemented allowed the Moroccan state to avoid the political unrest to which neighbouring Algeria was subjected, or the heightened authoritarianism manifested in Tunisia (Cohen 2004: 76). However, the reforms implemented beginning in 1983 weakened the existing industrial infrastructure, eroded the already struggling educational and health sector and put a halt to state funding for more comprehensive public infrastructure and housing projects in Hay Mohammadi (Cohen 2004, Bogaert 2011, Berriane 2013). Once a symbol for housing innovations and booming industry, the neighbourhood entered a period of prolonged decay, as factories closed or relocated to areas outside of the expanding periphery of Casablanca, and the housing shortage lead to serious overcrowding and sanitation problems. If the state intended to crush the community spirit of Hay Mohammadi, its programme was facilitated by the liberalisation programme imposed by the IMF (cf. Caldeira 2000, Cohen and Jaidi 2006).

It was not until the mid-1990s that growing internal pressures as well as international economic and political demands finally pushed Hassan II’s regime to acknowledge the existence of political prisoners and to set up a commission to investigate human rights abuses (Dennerlein 2012). This process culminated in 2004, after the death of Hassan II, when Morocco’s current King Mohammed VI created the Moroccan Equity

and Reconciliation Commission (ERC).[51] The only truth and reconciliation commission in the Arab World to date, the ERC's main mandate was to investigate the forced disappearances and arbitrary arrests that took place between 1956 and 1999. In its report released to the public in 2006, besides acknowledging individual victims the commission also established the existence of a number of "wounded territories" (*territoires toucheés*) and made recommendations for "community reparations", recognizing the public dimension of human rights violations.[52] By designating Hay Mohammadi as a "wounded territory" the commission cemented the already strong link identifying the material space of the neighbourhood with a social geography of state violence, poverty and trauma, echoing the views of Fatna El Bouih and Si Mohammad, and that of many of my interlocutors in Hay Mohammadi. Drawing on international recommendations the ERC's report acknowledged that the scarcity and struggle of the present were the enduring effects of targeted state violence, structural as well as physical. An aspect that has received less attention, or perhaps been decoupled from its political and economic causes, has been the social cost of the area's marginalization. In her poignant analysis of socio-economic transformations during the 1980s, Shana Cohen shows how the militaristic urban governing of Hay Mohammadi during that era combined with the economic decay caused by structural adjustment policies exacerbated existing social differences between a growing core of entrepreneurial elites and the impoverished working class of the urban margins (Cohen 2004). Social marginalization completed the circle of ghettoization for Hay Mohammadi. Meryem, who I introduced in the opening to this chapter, grew up in the vicinity of Hay Mohammadi but never entered the neighbourhood:

> "Even as kids we were told that it was a very dangerous place. We never strayed from the street where we usually played. We were somehow terrified of the kids in Hay Mohammadi. It was considered madness to step foot there. Just a very, very dangerous place. Today I can go there but I still don't feel *à l'aise* (at ease)."

This apprehension towards Hay Mohammadi as a dangerous place and as a morally compromised community took on a new form in 2003 in the aftermath of the suicide attacks that took Casablanca by surprise. On May 16 that year, a synchronized attack on

[51] For a detailed discussion of the Commission's history and mandate see Slyomovics (2005b, 2008).
[52] The full report comprising six volumes can be accessed online in Arabic, with summaries available in French, English, and Spanish. http://www.ier.ma/rubrique.php3?id_rubrique=316 (accessed on July 17th 2014).

multiple targets in Casablanca killed 41 and injured an estimated 100 others.[53] The targets included venues in the downtown area of Casablanca: the Hotel Farah, a Jewish community centre and the Casa de España club and restaurant. The suicide bombers were later associated with a local branch of the terrorist organization Al-Qaeda, but the detail that captured everyone's imagination pertained to their place of residence: Sidi Moumen, a sprawling *karyane* in the relative vicinity of Hay Mohammadi. If Hay Mohammadi had until then been associated with petty crime and brutal poverty, in the aftermath of the 2003 attacks it also had to fend off associations with Islamic radicalisation and terrorism (cf. Bayat 2007). The infamy of the area remained strong at the time of my fieldwork.

On numerous occasions, when encountering Casablancans outside of Hay Mohammadi, upon hearing about my daily routine in the neighbourhood I was immediately met with strong reactions which often employed caricaturized and exaggerated descriptions of the area to impress upon me how reckless I was to expose myself to such a dangerous and criminal neighbourhood. The reaction from an architect to whom I was briefly introduced epitomizes that attitude: "You must be like an angel to them, descended from heaven!" she exclaimed without a trace of irony upon hearing that my research site was not Mohammadia[54] but indeed *Hay* Mohammadi. Later, while visiting a gallery exhibit in downtown Casablanca together with a recent acquaintance, I was introduced to the gallery owner, a distinguished man in his late fifties who addressed me in French. Misunderstanding my interest in the neighbourhood he went on to say that it was important to research the area. "*Un bidonville en ciment*!" he exclaimed, meaning that Hay Mohammadi had merely cemented its slum, thereby implying that its backward life style had been made permanent.

Often assuming a shared position, these upper-class interlocutors would wax on for significant stretches of time on the scholarly worthiness of my chosen fieldsite, engaging in a clear move that designated the inhabitants of Hay Mohammadi as an exotic 'other'. This 'othering' was by no means categorically negative. As a mythical place in the modern history of Morocco, Hay Mohammadi was sometimes also associated with a vaguely defined idea of 'authentic' Moroccan life, a place where people continued to live rooted in the traditional values of a romanticized past. This attitude manifested itself most

[53] Various well-known media outlets picked up the news. See The New York Times online archives: http://www.nytimes.com/2003/05/17/international/worldspecial2/17CND-CASA.html

[54] Mohammadia is a city of roughly 350,000 inhabitants situated on the Atlantic coast between Rabat and Casablanca, known amongst architects and heritage enthusiasts for its modernist villas predominantly occupied by French retirees.

acutely around the time of religious holidays. Friends and informants who lived in the upper-class villa neighbourhoods of Casablanca claimed to envy my access to a place where "people probably still celebrate religious feasts the proper way", not having been spoiled by "the harmful effects (*les effets néfastes*) of modernization". Although I insisted that these were not my first experiences of religious feasts in Morocco, my interlocutors would maintain that it was good I would get to see a 'real' enactment of these rituals.

However, this association with tradition could also work against the inhabitants of Hay Mohammadi, as it would also be deployed in order to demonstrate their categorically un-modern identity and stasis. On one particular occasion when I was trying to obtain information on the *bidonville*-clearance project underway in Hay Mohammadi, an architect with the Urban Planning Agency took my interest in researching the neighbourhood as stemming from the particular backward way of life led by its inhabitants. "Oh yes, it is most fascinating (*très fascinant*)!" he exclaimed. "Those people still live like *'aroubiyin* (peasants), together with their animals; you will see how they have not yet adapted to the urban setting." At that point I had been doing fieldwork in Hay Mohammadi for close to one year but my fact-based contestation of his statement went unregistered.

As Si Mohammad's statement demonstrated, and as I will show in following chapters, neighbourhood residents were all too aware of the perceptions that outsiders held of the area. Moreover, as the following chapter will examine in more detail, this type of dynamic was also then mirrored as part of internal neighbourhood relations, as residents who lived in apartment blocks and 8x8 homes tried to draw boundaries between themselves and those who resisted the relocation efforts by continuing to inhabit the infamous *karyane* at the neighbourhood's core. As a consequence, among my close research interlocutors, those who had lived their lives in 8x8 homes often spoke of the *karyane* dwellers as 'backwards others', part of the more recent waves of migration to the city and without lasting roots in the *'hay*. As I discuss in Chapter 2 and 3, among these interlocutors, several voiced their frustration with how the *karyane'*s reputation extended to the area and acted as a pernicious influence on local youth.

In an interview he gave Susan Slyomovics in 2003, the late Driss Benzerki, a former political detainee and head of the ERC, insisted that the commission "gave equal importance to the issue of restoring dignity by way of truth seeking, eliminating the after-effects of violations, and preserving memory as an essential component of its reparations

approach."[55] Since the publication of the commission's report, the process for 'restoring dignity' to Hay Mohammadi has mainly taken the form of memory preservation activities, which have become entangled in wider political and cultural currents sweeping through Casablanca. In the following section I look at how the commemoration and memorialisation of trauma in Hay Mohammadi has been co-opted as part of a growing focus on rehabilitating Casablanca's colonial heritage. By unpacking the dynamic between these two movements I begin to consider how the politics of memory can have the un-intended consequence of de-politicizing the past, while continuing to inform current struggles for a dignified life.

The uses of history: architectural preservation and memory politics on the margins

"You know, he's right. Hay Mohammadi is more like an open air prison," Fuad told me after the lights came on. I met Fuad in February 2013 at a training session for volunteers organized by the well-known heritage preservation association Casamémoire. This would be his second year as a volunteer guide during an annual architectural Heritage Festival that took place in April. As part of this training, we were watching a recent documentary about Hay Mohammadi, produced with the help of a grant from the Equity and Reconciliation Commission (ERC).[56] Titled "*Ana al-hay, sept histoires et demi*" ("I am the 'hood, seven and a half stories"), the film traced the neighbourhood's infamous history through the interviews and testimonials given by seven (and a half) *welad al-hay*, or children of the neighbourhood. Fatna El Bouih and Si Mohammad were prominently featured in the film, alongside other local personalities. Despite having spent most of his life in a different part of Casablanca, Fuad also considered himself a *weld al-hay* (sing.), a son of the neighbourhood, because his parents had lived there during the 1960s. "My father worked at the post office, you know which one?" and he nodded proudly as I indicated that I was familiar with the building.

Fuad's comment at the start of this section referred to a statement made in the film by a local rapper, Barry. In the documentary, the rapper claimed that Hay Mohammadi

[55] Included in Slyomovics' discussion of the work of memory, gender and reparations in Morocco (2012: 109).

[56] The grant, awarded in 2011, was meant to fund a larger project, of which the documentary film was but one aspect. The publication of a book on the history of the neighbourhood, the organization of a neighbourhood festival called *Youm al Hay* (Days of the Neighbourhood), as well as an oral history project were the other components funded by the ERC grant. These related aspects are taken up later in the dissertation.

was like a prison to its youth, going on to say that those growing up in Hay Mohammadi were trapped in a vicious cycle of unemployment, petty crime and drug use, which also meant they physically seldom left the neighbourhood. Fuad's observation was also meant as a play on words in the oft-rehearsed line with which we were greeted at the heritage association. Casablanca, many of the members liked to say, was an 'open air museum', littered with the glorious architectural and urban experiments of the Art Deco and Modernist movements. Fuad's statement hinted at the particular hybrid form born out of the fusion of heritage and memory-politics discourses used to describe Hay Mohammadi.

Morocco's relationship to heritage is a fraught one and thus deserves a few words of clarification. Constantly situated in relation to identity-making practices, architectural heritage-making, and heritage-preservation in particular, have a charged history in the context of Morocco's colonial encounter with the French. Abdelmajid Arrif refers to this situation as the "paradoxical construction of heritage facts," whereby France took it upon itself to manage the "other's history" ("*la prise en charge de la mémoire de l'autre*") (1996: 154). Rooted in the paternalist, Orientalist discourse of the time, French preoccupation with the "scrupulous respect for the manners, customs and religion of the natives"[57] was at the core of official colonial policies for preserving Moroccan 'traditions' (Harmand 1910: 160). Shirine Hamadeh (1992) and Gwendolyn Wright (1991) have taken this argument further and demonstrated the instrumental role played by French preservationist ideas and practices in the consolidation and spatialization of colonial power. The invention of a static and timeless notion of Moroccan "tradition" was essential for the construction of techno-scientific colonial modernity and for justifying France's ascendancy over the local population.

Of particular significance is the fact that the architectural heritage worthy of preservation to French colonial eyes was predominantly embodied by the "Islamic city". As Janet Abu-Lughod (1987) has conclusively argued, this image was a particularly French colonial invention (cf. Eickelman 1974). Based on studies of the imperial city of Fez circa 1928 and later abstracted to the level of the entire Arab world by means of a series of questionable chains of authority, which Abu-Lughod likens to the Islamic legal concept of *isnad*,[58] the "traditional Islamic city" was morphologically defined by a Friday

[57] This preoccupation was tested in Tunisia as early as 1910 and then applied in Morocco a few years later. For a detailed discussion see Jules Harmand (1910).
[58] In the Islamic legal tradition, the authenticity of a statement is judged by the chain (*isnad*) from which it is descended from the past.

mosque, a central market and a public bath or *hammam* (Abu-Lughod 1987: 156). This image became a powerful administrative tool in the hands of the French colonial apparatus (Abu-Lughod 1987: 158-9). Presented as a genuine concern with historical preservation, the policies that helped sediment this image were based on the Orientalist idea of preserving a timeless society and its built forms. By promoting an "exotic, static, and disorderly people in contrast to advanced and technological European society", the French could justify the paternalist presence of the Protectorate in Morocco, and over other North African possessions (Abu-Lughod 1980, Wright 1991: 94). This practice was no different than what Edward Said and others have identified as the colonial tendency to either "tame" or "romanticize" as part of a paternalist mode of governing (Said 1978). As such, the "traditional city" became a tool for domination of the local "other." This invention of tradition, far from providing Moroccan society with a sense of historical continuity, actually fixed forms of social organization, political power and ritual to an extent that would hinder the chance of organic transformation over time (cf. Hobsbawm and Ranger 1983, Mitchell 1988, AlSayyad 1992: 13). Treating Morocco as a timeless society, where the passage of time had left no trace and the influence and history of contact with Europe was wilfully ignored, a reified idea of the traditional life and its constituent forms served the interests of the colonial administration. As Edmund Burke discusses in his recent book, *The Ethnographic State in Morocco* (2014), the chief supporter of these policies, the Resident General Lyautey, strove to preserve what he perceived as an established sense of Moroccan order and hierarchy as a means of stabilizing potential hostile forces through conciliatory measures.

Such was the power of this canonized image of the 'Islamic city' that in 1986, King Hassan II, in a famous speech that he made to the Moroccan Architects' Association, lamented what he saw as "[t]he classic form of the Moroccan Islamic city, the flower of our cultural greatness, in the process of disappearing into a nameless and indescribable magma" (quoted in Garret 2010). It is worth noting, however, that Casablanca was never considered to be among the list of Moroccan cities seen to embody this ideal. While Fez, Meknes, Marrakech, Tetouan and even Essaouira can draw on their historical status as imperial cities to legitimize their claim to "cultural greatness," Casablanca has often been considered a "city without memory" (Pieprzak 2010), a perpetual construction site (Ossman 1994), or a place without a soul ("*sans âme"),* moved only by finance and industry (Cattedra 2010: 16). Paradoxically, once more, Casablanca's road to recognition

as a valuable example of architectural heritage begins with the 'Emergency Urbanism' years. When Pinceau's team was charged with elaborating the new master plan for the city, they created a survey of "*bâtiments à protéger*" (buildings to protect). The list included mosques and saints' shrines in the old city core (*al-medina al-qadima*), alongside a dozen buildings erected during the Protectorate era (Garret 2010: 4). However, when the master plan was ratified in 1985, the recommendations for classifying certain buildings as historical monuments were left out.[59]

Despite occasional papers and articles in the local media calling for the rehabilitation of decaying buildings in the old colonial quarters of Casablanca,[60] the first case of public mobilisation for the preservation of a colonial building took place in the early 1990s.[61] Several families who benefitted from rent control and non-revocable leases had inhabited the Bessoneau building, popularly known as the Lincoln Hotel in downtown Casablanca.[62] When part of the roof caved in due to lack of maintenance, the city administration issued an emergency eviction order and slated the building for demolition. A rumour that the owner intended to replace the Lincoln Hotel with a seven-story office building mobilized a small group of Casablancans in favour of preserving the Hotel.[63] A second protest in 1995 against the demolition of a famous villa by the architect Marius Boyer led to the creation of the preservation association Casamémoire.[64] Founded by a small group of Moroccan and French architects practicing in Casablanca, the association has been at the forefront of the struggle for petitioning the city's administration to develop a framework for the preservation of colonial buildings, which the association considers to be unique examples of 20th century architecture.[65] Drawing on the landmark work of architectural historians Jean-Louis Cohen and Monique Eleb (1998, 2002), in its first years the association selectively focused on buildings in the former French quarters of

[59] The only site to be classified as historical heritage in Casablanca is the prehistoric quarry of Sidi Abderrahmane. In 1951 traces of the *Atlanthropus Mauritanicus*, dating 400 000 years back, were discovered at this site. See Raynal et al. (2010).
[60] A book by Casablanca-born architect and photographer Jean-Michel Zurfluh made for the first time the case for protecting the medinas of Casablanca, referring to both the old Moroccan core as well as the French built quarters. See Zurfluh (1987).
[61] From a personal conversation with Karim Rouissi, architect and member of Casamémoire.
[62] The construction dated from 1916-1917, and was designed by the French architect Hubert Bride. See Cohen and Eleb (2002: 89).
[63] Despite ongoing efforts, the Lincoln Hotel's fate remained undecided at the end of my fieldwork in May 2014.
[64] Marius Boyer was a French-born architect who practiced in Casablanca between 1919 and 1947. His work was prolific, and includes the building of the current *Wilaya* (prefecture) and several bank and newspaper headquarters. See Cohen and Eleb (2002: 464).
[65] From a personal conversation with Laure Augereau, project coordinator at Casamémoire.

Casablanca, neglecting at the time both the plight of the decaying old medina as well as more recently built heritage such as the housing estates in Hay Mohammadi (Garret 2010: 6).

Expanding its reach in recent years, the association's stated objective is the identification and documentation of all aesthetically and historically significant edifices, for their future protection by a yet to be written preservation law. As a non-profit organization, the association survives with the help of foreign grants, and through its participation in regional networks supported by funding from the European Union.[66] Its membership is open to the public, and I encountered not a few amateur historians and local architecture enthusiasts who had joined in recent years. Additionally, on a more temporary basis, local architecture students and young professionals volunteered their time for various heritage activities. The core of the association, however, was composed of a small group of architects, who acted in a consultative role alongside a working staff of four project managers who handled the operational aspects of the association's day-to-day activities. These details are significant because they determine to a significant degree the association's approach to heritage-making practices in the city. Furthermore, as will be addressed in more detail in the following chapters, these practices inscribed the association within a local as well as an internationally recognized NGO ecology and discourse, framing and influencing the type of work taken on by the association.

From an analysis of the language and materials used to describe and promote Casablanca's heritage, it is apparent that the terms employed by the association purposefully avoid the word 'colonial,' preferring the less politically charged 'Art Deco' and 'modern architecture' (Garret 2010). There is a two-fold aspect to this choice. On the one hand, by employing terms that are stylistic rather than political or historical, the association hoped to foster the gradual appropriation of this heritage by local inhabitants, as well as Casablancans and Moroccans more broadly. But appropriation seemed to carry different meanings for different stakeholders, and the senior members of Casamémoire deemed some forms of appropriation more desirable than others. As such, the material appropriation and modifications made by the inhabitants of the *Nid d'Abeille* and *Semiramis* buildings to their dwellings – to which I will come back to shortly – were

[66] The association is part of a Mediterranean network of institutions collaborating under the framework of the EU-sponsored programme Euromed Heritage 4. The aims of this programme are to "identify, document and promote 19th and 20th century architectural heritage in North Africa, in order to encourage its integration into the current social and economic structures" (my own translation from the original French). See more at: http://mutual-heritage.crevilles-dev.org (accessed on July 21st, 2014).

decried by those who favoured a more preservationist approach to heritage. On the other hand, by claiming this apolitical stance, their heritage-making practices, which I discuss below, risk the reification of a depoliticized representation of the past, with significant implications for the present. These heritage-making practices become salient in the context in which the association strived to inform the production of a contemporary, modern Casablancan urban identity, and hoped to exert considerable influence on local policy making.

At the time of my research, the association's main aim was achieved through public activities that were meant to raise awareness and foster a larger knowledge about and appreciation for Casablanca's architectural heritage among the general public. To this end they organized an annual series of monthly public lectures (the *Université Populaire du Patrimoine*) and a three-day architectural heritage festival, titled *Les Journées du Patrimoine* (The Heritage Days).[67] The association's greater aim was to eventually have the city designated a UNESCO World Heritage site (cf. Cohen and Eleb 2002, Avermaete 2005). The public lecture events were scheduled once a month and usually began in October, with the last lecture given in May or June. During the period of my fieldwork I was able to attend the Spring session of 2013 and the entire session starting in October 2013 and ending in May 2014. The Heritage Festival was seen as the culmination of the association's efforts, and a large part of the year was spent preparing the activities that took place during the festival weekend. In the form of free, guided visits taking place for the past six years on the first weekend in April, the *Journées du Patrimoine* festival was a citywide event, in which selected parts of Casablanca temporarily became an open-air museum.[68]

The 2011 inclusion of Hay Mohammadi among the sites visited during the festival weekend occurred in conjunction with the association's bid for funding from the Equity and Reconciliation Commission (ERC) for a cultural commemoration project. While I address the ERC-funded project in greater detail in the next chapter, I will focus here on the particularities of the entanglement of heritage and commemoration practices that could be witnessed during the Heritage Festival in Hay Mohammadi. Citing lingering safety

[67] In an email sent to its members and volunteers, Casamémoire announced that public attendance during the 2014 festival weekend had been the highest yet, at approximately 25 000 visitors.
[68] The list of sites included the old medina, the former French administrative quarter in the downtown area, the *Habous* district (name after the Islamic religious foundation that had owned the land), and several colonial buildings formerly owned by merchants and financiers along Casablanca's boulevard Mohammad V.

concerns, in 2013 Hay Mohammadi spaces provoked an ambivalent response from both locals and visitors. The latter were attracted by what they saw as the raw authenticity of the area's decaying post-industrial, modernist aura, but they were wary of its population, which had yet to be actively included in this event. A month into my fieldwork, I began attending the public lecture events in February 2013, and decided to sign up and undergo the training to become a volunteer guide for the 2013 *Journées du Patrimoine* festival. I was curious to learn how one went about curating the landmarks of colonial 'techno-cosmopolitanism', to borrow Paul Rabinow's term, alongside the markers of state violence. How would this ephemeral performance over the span of two days interact with the lives of the everyday inhabitants of this maligned quarter? In the next section I look at the performance registers employed during the Heritage Festival and critically engage with what I see as the ensuing process of *eventification* and 'staging' of the urban margins.

Performing heritage, becoming a guide

It was a bright, sunny Sunday morning as I walked the deserted streets of downtown Casablanca in order to reach the address I was given for the volunteer training session. The only other beings out in the street at that time of day were the city's ubiquitous stray cats, rummaging for food in the overflowing trash containers outside every apartment building. After a few long moments of confusion and retracing my steps, I finally arrived at the *Théâtre de la F.O.L.* (Theatre of the Federation for Secular Works).[69]

The training workshop was meant to begin at 9 a.m. and last until 5 p.m. that afternoon. Casamémoire had emailed in advance a copy of the provisional schedule for the day, according to which our *formation* (Fr. training) would involve listening to no less than five lectures, each lasting one hour, with a two-hour break for lunch. The French term used to describe the process of becoming a volunteer guide is suggestive of the rather formal approach towards the transmission of knowledge that was to occur that day. Commonly used in French, the term can be taken to mean 'professional education' or 'technical training', but also moulding something into a desired shape.[70]

Throughout the day, the approximately forty volunteers sat in the cavernous, frigid belly of the poorly-lit theatre hall, straining to hear what each speaker had to say because

[69] The *Federation des Oeuvres Laiques* comprises various non-governmental associations that focus on educational and artistic activities.

[70] The term *formation* has also entered darija, and was used frequently by young adults in Casablanca due to their increased exposure to and participation in continued career development events as well as international development discourses. I discuss this in more depth in Chapter 4.

of the space's poor acoustics. After a few opening words from the association's acting president at the time, the first lecture was delivered by one of the founding members, a well-known Moroccan architect. Meant as a general overview of Casablanca's history, the lecture began with the city's pre-historic origins and plunged into a doze several youths sitting in the same row with me. The following lectures continued in this pattern, and some of the more diligent volunteers were busy taking notes, although the majority of the information had also been distributed to us in the form of a printed booklet. At the end of each lecture, those who were trying to get the accurate dates for some building or other made a few inquiries. By the end of the day, however, it became evident that as volunteer guides we were expected to memorize a collection of dates and names, and deliver them in a style of our choice to the visitors who would arrive during the festival weekend. While the first two speakers had mainly spoken in broad strokes about Casablanca's urban development, the afternoon lecture that was dedicated to Hay Mohammadi included a wealth of slides. By that point I was very familiar with the images projected. Having studied the archival materials relating to the urban planning and architectural development of Hay Mohammadi, I had encountered these materials in architectural history books, articles, and archival databases. Defined by a focus on technical architectural details, not only did these materials serve as the core source of information for volunteer guides, but also the performative register that framed their significance had a considerable effect on the way this heritage was approached by guides and then conveyed to visitors.

The heritage association depended on its volunteer base for making the festival a reality and a success, and as such they began recruiting new volunteer guides at least seven months in advance. In places like Hay Mohammadi, they turned to local community organizations for help in getting administrative approval for the visits as well as for publicity and recruiting volunteers.

Amina, one of my main informants, was in her mid-twenties and had worked in one of the community organizations partnering with Casamémoire in Hay Mohammadi. Born in the neighbourhood and having lived her whole life in the vicinity of the Derb Moulay Cheriff commissariat, she was dismissive of the volunteer trainings. In fact, Amina told me, she had signed up to be a volunteer guide for the sites in Hay Mohammadi the first year that the neighbourhood was included in the festival. She had attended all training sessions, but eventually chose not to participate. Assuming a very brittle demeanour, she told me one day as I mentioned the training session I had attended: "What

do they know about Hay Mohammadi? They don't know anything. *Walu* (nothing, zero)." Surprised by her answer, I asked her if she found the presentation to be factually incorrect, but her renewed statement pointed elsewhere. Laughing anxiously she said: "What does that fatso know about my own neighbourhood? I stopped going. I didn't want to be a guide for them!" Amina had been clearly upset at being lectured to by someone who, in her opinion, could not 'know' the neighbourhood in a meaningful way. The architect's academic knowledge of a place she considered her home was inauthentic when compared to the knowledge derived from having lived her whole life in Hay Mohammadi. On the other hand, as I discuss again in Chapter 5, Amina claimed to have learned a lot about her own neighbourhood through the social-history project implemented as part of the reconciliation process (see Chapter 2). It appeared that her views about the architectural heritage trainings were related to the manner in which these were carried out. On a separate occasion, Amina went into more detail about her views on the matter: "All they do is come here and take. They take photos, they ask for volunteers and our help, they do their visits, and then they leave. Often they don't even send us the photos afterwards."

Amina's view was by no means unanimous among her peers at the *jam'iyya* or other inhabitants I spoke with about the festival. The majority of my other interlocutors took an indifferent stance towards the heritage events. As Asma articulated it during one conversation before the festival weekend, she saw the events as "something for *nass dial barra*" (outsiders). While some inhabitants, like the elderly man whose statement opens the Introduction, were frustrated by the manner in which resources were invested into what they saw as 'touristic' events rather than better living conditions, several other inhabitants from the sites visited during the weekend told me that as long as it did not impact them adversely they did not particularly object to the guided visits.

When I mentioned to one of the Casamemoire organizers that some inhabitants felt patronized by the way the trainings and visits were performed, the person in question took the criticism openly. However, she stressed the fact that even as outsiders the guides and organisers were equally and passionately invested in the future of Hay Mohammadi, and that they too were struggling with limited resources.

During the Heritage Festival all trained guides were able to express their preference for guiding visits of particular sites, and would ideally attend at least one visit of their chosen site guided by a veteran volunteer, or, in certain cases, one of the Casamémoire project coordinators. Landmarks in the downtown area of Casablanca

usually attracted a larger number of volunteer guides as well as visitors because they were considered easily accessible, safe and slightly more glamorous. As a volunteer guide for the Hay Mohammadi sites I was one of a handful of people, the majority of whom had chosen to perform their guide duties stationed at the largest landmark of the four that made up the tour. I offered to help guide visits on the first day of the festival, while using the second day to engage in participant observation at the downtown sites. In performing the role of both guide and guided visitor, and having access to both those who enabled the production of the heritage experience as well as its consumption, I was able to experience some telling differences with regards to what Hamadeh (1992) has termed the "museumification" of the recent ruins of colonial modernity.

The sites included in the Hay Mohammadi visits began at the *Anciens Abattoirs*, a disused slaughterhouse on the edge of the neighbourhood, dating from 1922, that had been closed in 2002 and was in the complicated process of being transformed into an alternative art space (see Chapter 4). The *Abattoirs* had been the first site in Hay Mohammadi that the preservation association had included in the Heritage Festival. Stretching over 5 hectares, with a variety of different spaces, it had been decided that a small team of guides would focus solely on the *Abattoirs*. Those visitors who could be enticed and were brave enough, continued the visit by bus to the SOCICA estate,[71] built in 1947 by a consortium of industrialists to house factory workers. From there, the visitors climbed back on the bus in order to reach two of the most significant 'ruins of modernity' that the neighbourhood had to offer in terms of housing architecture: the *Nid d'Abeille* and *Semiramis* housing blocks. Built as part of Écochard's plan for *Carrières Centrales*/Hay Mohammadi, extensively researched and somewhat fetishized by art historians and students of architecture during the past twenty years (Cohen and Eleb 1998, 2002, Avermaete 2005, 2010a, von Osten 2010, Culley 2011, Chaouni 2011), they remain the first high-rise housing estates built for Moroccans during the colonial era. Striking in their original design, the buildings have been modified with time by their inhabitants. All the spaces above the patios have been walled-in and converted into extra bedrooms, living rooms, or storage space. Networks of clotheslines wove a colourful display between the support pillars of the patios and several

[71] This was one of the first worker housing estates built by a conglomerate of industries between 1933-1945. SOCICA is an acronym standing in for *Société Cherifienne de la Cite Ouvriere Marocaine (*formerly *indigene) de Casablanca*, a construction materials company still in existence. In 2014 the company was in the process of ceding ownership of the quarter to the inhabitants. The previous arrangement consisted of rent-controlled contracts that averaged 100 dirhams (£ 10) per month. For an art-historical perspective see Cohen and Eleb (2002: 289-291).

new windows pierced the existing walls, while satellite dishes mushroomed on both the roof and the building's façade (Fig.3).

As guides-in-training, it had been suggested that we could create a 'before' and 'after' performance for the visitors. With the aid of archival pictures that had been photocopied for this purpose, the veteran guides would unfailingly exact a communal exclamation from each group as the visitors were confronted with the juxtaposition of past (in photocopy form) and present (in bricks and mortar).

Figure 3. *Nid d'Abeille* with modifications by the inhabitants, which include the mosque, added in the late 1990s. Photograph by the author, March 2013.

Due to the small numbers of visitors, and the seniority of two particular guides, I did not get to lead any groups during the three days of the festival. Instead, I acted as what might be called 'assistant guide' and for the most time hovered at the edges of the group, taking note of the visitors' questions and reactions, answering puzzled stares from the inhabitants, running into acquaintances from the neighbourhood, or handing out commemorative maps to bystanders (for more on this see Chapter 2). The groups I accompanied were predominantly composed of a mix of Moroccans and French Casablancans, the majority of whom could be described as upper-middle class and upon being asked told me that they had never before set foot in Hay Mohammadi. Many of them expressed dismay at the ruination of these 'monuments' by their 'ignorant' inhabitants, while some of the latter might be watching us from behind window curtains.

The lack of contact with the current residents of the neighbourhood, and the overwhelming focus on the buildings that were visited during the tour became apparent even before the start of the Heritage Festival weekend. During one of the field visits that was organized as part of our training and took place three months before the Festival, I had asked one of the organizers how and when were the inhabitants of these quarters informed of the upcoming visits, and what had their involvement in the event been in the past. This elicited a passionate response in front of the entire group of eight volunteers-in-training: "This is very important to keep in mind. Last year we had some issues. Because this is Hay Mohammadi, it is not safe. People here do not understand the significance of the visits and they can get loud and aggressive. You just have to be careful." The organizer went on to add that the previous year they had encountered a resident who had offered to open his home to visitors, underlining however that this had been an isolated act of hospitality and that overall we were to expect a certain measure of inhospitable behaviour from the inhabitants. Although the statement had not answered my question, it provided a window onto how some of the organizers were approaching their mission. It also suggested an explanation for why the inhabitants of Hay Mohammadi did not attend the guided visits throughout the entire weekend of the Heritage Festival, as well as the use of the bus for shuttling visitors between the only three sites. Asma and Amina, my closest informants (see the Introduction) and long-time inhabitants of the neighbourhood admitted to have no interest in the Heritage Festival or the guided visits. "Those things are for foreigners and fancy people", Asma claimed when I teasingly asked if she would come for one of my guided tours. For her part, Amina, who had already expressed her dismissal of the guide training, told me she would surely find something more pleasant to do on that weekend.

In a conversation with one of the project coordinators, I had suggested that visiting groups might simply stroll from one site to the next. At that point I had been getting increasingly familiar with the streetscape in Hay Mohammadi, and knew that the distances could be easily covered on foot in ten to fifteen minutes. I added that walking between the sites would also give visitors an occasion to experience the rich urban landscape of the neighbourhood, thereby better contextualizing the symbolic buildings that the visits focused on. Countering my suggestion, the project coordinator explained that the main concern was expediency, and walking would not be feasible since the sites were far from one another. My interlocutor also went on to stress that visitors would risk getting lost.

However, since similar distances between sites in the downtown area were navigated by foot, I began to wonder if expedience was being used as a way to veil the organizers' lingering concerns for safety, which, indeed some of the guides admitted to more readily. It cannot be dismissed, however, that this particular 'staging' of Hay Mohammadi for the benefit of visitors had a significant impact on the way the neighbourhood's image continued to be perceived by outsiders. While these heritage practices and events seemed to leave a negligible mark on the lives of the local residents, visitors from elsewhere seemed to take away a mixed message. On the one hand, as Meryem, the graphic designer, had once told me, visitors could see that there were "interesting, worthwhile things" in Hay Mohammadi. On the other hand, the particular performance registers used to present these landmarks seemed to reinforce stereotypical views of local inhabitants as ignorant and at odds with 'modernity'.

Conclusion

As David Lowenthal (1998) cautions, one should not confound history with heritage. In their attempt to appeal to the largest number of stakeholders, heritage-making processes are inadvertently bound to engage in what Dearborn and Stallmeyer (2010: 33) call "flexible emending", with the goal of constructing a coherent narrative. They show, however, that this emending is particularly pronounced in the case of "inconvenient heritage", at sites where certain aspects that are considered "unpalatable, incongruent, or politically inexpedient" become either bracketed or erased from the social representation of that heritage (ibid: 34). Similarly, through the particular register chosen for the performance of Hay Mohammadi's selective heritage, "politically inexpedient" aspects of that heritage that would explain its transformation and palimpsestic appropriation at the hands of the inhabitants were left out. The consequences of this type of emending is the sidestepping of more complex readings and representations of the past (ibid: 35). Because of such heritage-making practices, I suggest that memory and history of place become 'disembedded' from their immediate social context, codified instead by the expert terms volunteer guides repeated year after year (Edensor 2005: 18), and a preference for the shock-effect of the 'before and after' performance. The manner in which the visits were organized also suggested that, in order to appreciate the significance of this built heritage, the buildings needed to be approached as separate from their human inhabitants. Owing to this, the deeply sensual and contingent meaning of these richly textured landmarks became marginalized or even vilified, as inhabitants were found to be at fault for not

preserving the buildings in their original form. None of the guides mentioned the fact – which I later learned from one of the board members of Casamémoire – that the *Nid d'Abeille* and *Semiramis* buildings had been under state ownership since Independence, and that in fact the deplorable state in which the buildings found themselves was partly owed to decades of neglect and lack of up-keep that the Moroccan state was responsible for. Because of the unprofitability of the buildings – rent control had kept the cost per household at a monthly 80 dirham (£ 8) average – the company was planning to cede ownership, albeit without undertaking any of the necessary rehabilitation works that it was accountable for.

Faced with such lacunae in the representation of Hay Mohammadi spaces, in this chapter I have attempted to historicize the colonial and post-colonial production of marginality specific to the neighbourhood and to draw attention to how heritage-making practices and discourses have played a significant part in the depoliticization and production of a de-historicized nostalgia for the past. By looking at the timeline of events that traced Hay Mohammadi's history, it becomes evident that the post-colonial Moroccan state not only inherited the spatial organization and power mechanisms from the French, but improved upon the tools of urban control devised by colonial administrators, effectively perpetuating the fragmentation and inequality inscribed in the city's early planning, and upgrading former policing infrastructure into spaces of more efficient repression.

This chapter has also shown how the presence of the Moroccan state on the urban margins fluctuated in the years after independence from neglect, to heavy-handed policing and control, to installation of monumental landmarks such as prefectural buildings meant to literally territorialize its presence. The years of institutionalized neglect and structural violence captured under the 'Years of Lead' and 'Emergency Urbanism' labels, together with the economic effects of structural adjustment policies, contributed to the degradation of public infrastructures in the neighbourhood (cf. Cohen 2004). As such, in recent decades the state's presence in Hay Mohammadi could be described through the decaying health care and public education facilities, the insufficient number of day-cares and leisure spaces and growing feelings of isolation among its inhabitants. As the words of Fatna El Bouih and Si Mohammad have shown, this situation led many inhabitants to think that the state had purposefully wanted to punish them.

Despite the official reconciliation process started by King Mohammad VI, the heritage-making practices presented in this chapter demonstrate that civil society actors were still reluctant to engage directly with this 'inconvenient heritage'. Although Casamemoire had been one of the main actors in the commemoration efforts initiated by the truth and reconciliation commission (ERC), the Heritage Festival visits did not include any of the landmarks associated with the 'Emergency Urbanism' and 'Years of Lead' era. I have suggested that this might be owed to the "politically inexpedient" nature of this complicated heritage, but other reasons for this might be discovered by taking into account the potential logistical constraints of adding these sites to the visits, and also by considering the still tense and ambiguous dynamic between the regime of King Mohammad VI and Moroccan civil society. As the next chapters will show, the presence of the Moroccan state and its power to effect local change in lower-class, peripheral neighbourhoods like Hay Mohammadi was not always a straightforward matter.

Representing a select topography of the neighbourhood, the sites presented to the public during the Festival visits were steeped in the symbolism of and nostalgia for the bright and promising days of a simpler, Modernist past. Speaking of the abundant landscape of Moroccan street festivals, Kataryna Pieprzak has argued that, unlike restricted and restrictive spaces in museums, open-air festivals can foster a more intimate and immediate engagement between spectator, art, and the city (2010: 129). Through their focus on a preservationist approach to built heritage, the performative registers that shaped the outlines of Casamémoire's ephemeral 'open air' visits failed to meaningfully engage with the what Pieprzak describes as the "palimspestic nature of the street and the multiple histories and experiences of that environment" (ibid.). Shuttling visitors by bus between the sites ensured that the spectacle of heritage was at a safe remove from the messy vitality of a lived-in space. Furthermore, by placing the blame for the current degradation on the ignorance of the inhabitants, the past, and I would argue the present as well, became de-politicized and could be enjoyed in a confined aesthetic form for the duration of one sunny afternoon. But by excluding the inhabitants of this lived space from its celebration, and by omitting to engage with the complicated history and pragmatics of local spatial appropriation, the Festival precluded an understanding of history as organic, lived experience, and seemed to hamper its own ability to foster the kind of proud appropriation of local heritage it claimed to pursue.

These themes are carried over into the next chapter, where my inquiry into the production of Hay Mohammadi space continues by unpacking the significance and impact of representations created by heritage and commemoration practices.

Chapter 2 | Tracing the margins: grids, maps and a game-board

"Maps and photographs betray the designs of those who create them. Because these aims rarely coincide with our own motivations, they bear little resemblance to the personal maps we draw with our feet as we go about our daily occupations."

- Susan Ossman, *Picturing Casablanca*

On my first visit to Casablanca in 2010 I had brought along a printed copy of an Internet map. As I sat in the backseat of a red *petit* taxi, I used the map to guide my driver who had trouble finding the address I had given him. Navigating the city in this way, we finally arrived at my destination. Before I could say goodbye and thank him, the driver pointed to the sheet of paper in my hand and asked if he could keep it. "Of course!" I said, and handed him the print out. Smoothing his thick, greying moustache he thanked me and told me he had never seen a map of the city in his thirty years as a taxi driver.

When I returned to Casablanca for fieldwork in January 2013, everyone seemed to own a smartphone that featured navigational applications, while high-speed Internet connectivity and the familiarity with Internet maps were becoming ubiquitous in other major urban areas as well. The majority of my friends and informants, however, continued to use familiar landmarks to make their way around the city. Rough maps of the city's downtown area were available at the tourist information centre, and the recently opened tramway network had also brought with it maps of the areas it covered. But obtaining an official, topographically accurate map of Casablanca remained a difficult task. This is not all that surprising, considering there is a long history of the state and the military using maps as tools for power and control, making a territory legible and amenable to surveillance (Foucault 1975, Scott 1998, Mitchell 2002). According to David Turnbull, eighteenth century French national surveys led to such a complex and strong intermeshing of scientific practice, maps, and the state, that "in effect they coproduced one another" (2000: 94). In Morocco, where the Ministry of Interior supervises the activities of Urban Planning agencies, the most recent cadastral maps of any given city continue to be a fiercely guarded state secret.

The previous chapter aimed to historically contextualize Hay Mohammadi's marginalization by attending to the political and economic forces that led to its physical

degradation and ill fame, while at the same time considering the growing impact of commemorative and heritage actions on the neighbourhood's identity. This chapter advances this discussion by looking at the role played by maps in the production of a particular iconographic representation of Hay Mohammadi space. Specifically, I consider some of the ways in which maps and plans of the neighbourhood have become reified through various discursive and material practices (Lefebvre 1991). As such, the ethnographic material in this chapter attends to how these various representations of space have come into being, and follows some of the uses and trajectories they have opened up for other mappings of the neighbourhood (Appadurai 1986). How are maps of Hay Mohammadi used and by whom? Who has the authority to represent space and create maps of the neighbourhood? If space and its representation are symptomatic of the power relationships governing that space, what can be uncovered by considering how the space of a marginalized neighbourhood has been and continues to be mapped?

In what follows, I first look at some of the earliest plans for and maps of the neighbourhood, and follow their evolution into ever new and different iterations. One such iteration I consider is a map commemorating the 'memory places' of Hay Mohammadi as part of the process of reparation and reconciliation that I began to discuss in the previous chapter. In its turn, this inspired the creation of a game-board. To this genealogy of mapping efforts I add my own, and in the final section of this chapter I discuss a cognitive mapping exercise I undertook with my informants in the neighbourhood. In tracing the ramifications and entanglements of several attempts to map not only the physical but also the social, historical, and memorial space of the neighbourhood, this chapter also brings together the main protagonists of the dissertation. As such, it offers a glimpse into how inhabitants, local organizations and representatives of the state interacted as part of a sometimes-conflicting effort to map out a marginal space.

Rational maps and plans

Conceived of as a 'laboratory for Moroccan modernity' (see Chapter 1), the history of scientific maps and charts of Hay Mohammadi can be traced back to the creation of its earliest industrial infrastructures. If a map of Casablanca from the turn of the century depicts only the old medina (town core) surrounded by squares labelled *jardins* (most likely vegetable gardens) (Weisgerber 1904), within ten years of that date we can begin to find a series of thematic maps created by the new colonial *Service de l'Urbanisme*, each

addressing an aspect of the rapidly growing city: zoning, types of industry, population growth, *bidonville* distribution, and the availability of schools (Écochard 1955).

These demographic and industrial charts of Casablanca were part of a systematic, rational, scientific colonial approach towards modernity and governance (Rabinow 1989, Abu-Lughod 1980, Wright 1991). Historically, scholars have looked at maps as reflecting a desire for completeness and control (Scott 1998), affording a viewpoint of what Michel de Certeau called the "voyeur-god" (1984: 93). Starting in the 1940s, urban planning, census taking, measuring and counting were increasingly employed in the process of managing and governing what was considered an increasingly volatile worker population in Casablanca. Ethnographic surveys undertaken by colonial sociologists were eventually put in the service of developing one of the most pure forms of Cartesian city and housing planning known at the time: Écochard's *trame* (grid) (cf. Montagne 1952, Berque 1959, Adam 1968).

As the previous chapter already mentioned, when Michel Écochard became the head of the *Service de l'Urbanisme* in 1947 he began working almost straight away on "the problem" of working-class housing (Eleb 2000: 57). If Brasilia is a Modernist city *par excellence* (Holston 1990), Casablanca's urban development in the 1940s and 1950s was framed as a gradual contestation of the High Modernist movement's agenda, or what Paul Rabinow has called "middling modernism" (1992: 56).[72] According to Rabinow's genealogy of French urban planning in Morocco, "middling modernism" followed a period in which Lyautey's ideas and policies of pacification sought to "regulate history, society, and culture by working over existent institutions and spaces", while at the same time orchestrating an artful balance between the universal dimension of its technocratic practice and the social and cultural specificities of the local context (ibid: 52-54). Rejecting this paternalistic approach, Écochard's "middling modernism" sought to address universal social needs while leaving space for what he termed 'organic' growth (Écochard 1955, Rabinow 1992: 56).

Elaborating on Le Corbusier's principle of "housing for the greatest number," Écochard rejected the mechanistic concept of "*machine à habiter*" and instead proposed a design for a "living tissue," that would organically develop into a community over time

[72] The *Congrès International des Architectes Modernes* was founded in June 1928, and disbanded in 1959. The stated goal of the organization was to promote "architecture as a social art." See Eric Mumford (2000). Its defining manifesto was called the Athens Charter, created at the fourth CIAM Meeting in 1933. It was dominated by Le Corbusier's vision for urban planning, delimiting a city into four areas: recreation, living, work, and transportation. Also see John Gold (1998).

(Écochard 1955, Avermaete 2010: 155). Drawing on existing research about Moroccan settlements that had been gathered by the colonial apparatus (cf. Berque 1959), Écochard advocated a solution based on a "neighbourhood unit" that could house up to 1,800 inhabitants – a significant number for an administration that was trying to deal with a growing *bidonville* population (Avermaete and Casciato 2014: 258). As Figure 5 illustrates, this was a particularly acute problem in Hay Mohammadi (*Carrières Centrales* at the time), whose population of 56,667 placed it as the largest *bidonville*, or *karyane* in the country (Écochard 1955). Each neighbourhood unit would be contained inside a housing grid composed of 8x8 meter plots or 'cells' (Fig. 4), which could theoretically allow for multiple arrangements and combinations (Eleb 2000: 57).

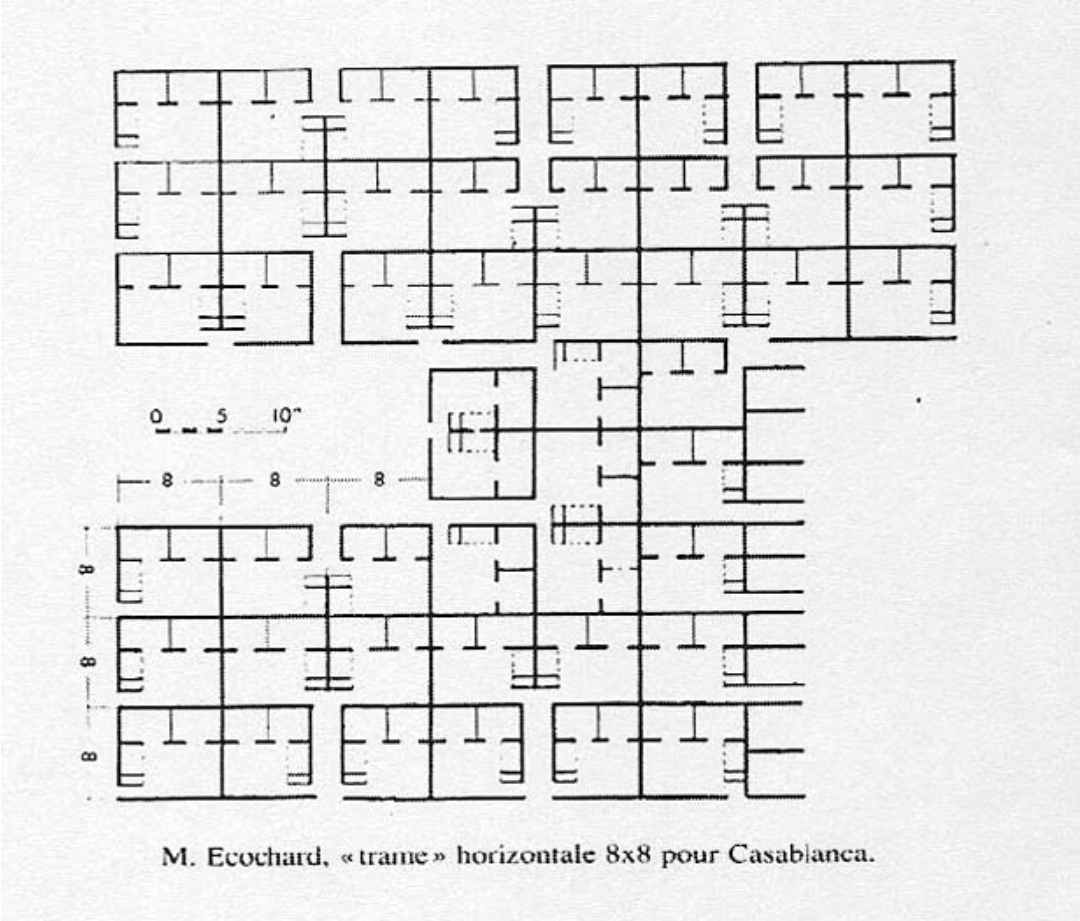

Figure 4. Écochard's grid. Source: Archives of the Ecole Nationale d'Architecture, Rabat, Morocco.

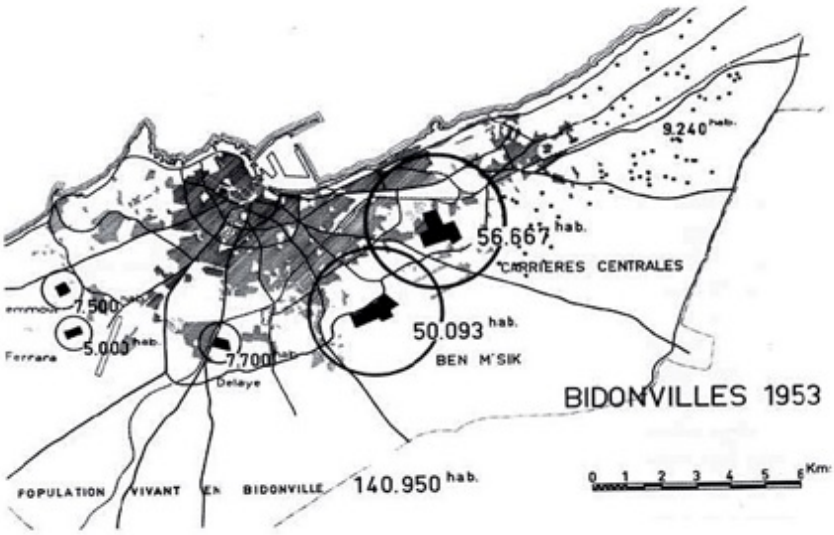

Figure 5. Map showing the location and population of existing *bidonvilles* in Casablanca in 1953. Source: Écochard *Casablanca, le roman d'une ville* (1955).

Inspired by the vernacular architecture of rural Moroccan homes,[73] each plot would permit the building of a standard two room dwelling with a central courtyard projected to accommodate one family (Écochard 1955). As such, this design was meant to help mediate the transition from a rural mode of life to an industrial urban existence, and help Moroccans acclimate to modernity (Cohen and Eleb 2002: 320-21). Écochard's grid became widely celebrated at the time for the way it addressed a "problem of technique and of conscience for France" (Écochard 1950: 6), but also for the manner in which it was seen to incorporate local typologies with universal standards of space, hygiene, rest, education and work (Smithson 1955, Cohen and Eleb 2002, Avermaete 2005).

Developed at a time of growing anti-colonial unrest, the grid and its power to order and control both space and people cannot be divorced from its political context. Some architectural historians contend that although Écochard never mentioned the political situation in his writings he could not have been oblivious to it (Avermaete 2010), and argue that he rather saw his role as that of a humanist technocrat, paving the way for further development (Eleb 2000). Aziza Chaouni seems to agree with this evaluation, emphasizing the fact that it was Écochard himself who pushed the colonial administration to act on the issue of housing for the local population (2011: 62-63). She nevertheless also

[73] The vernacular movement in architecture garnered international attention in 1964 with Bernard Rudofsky's famous book *Architecture without Architects,* which glorified the genius of builders who knew how to translate the "traditional" circumstances of their communities into built form. Also see Sibyl Moholy-Nagy (1957), and John F. C. Turner (1977).

points out that such humanist ideals existed alongside an increasing depoliticization of urban planning practices, as Écochard and his team never questioned colonialism as such, only its neglect of 'indigenous populations' (ibid: 65).

It cannot be disputed that in its projected efficiency, the grid's intended power was to educate recent migrants to the city about appropriate dwelling practices, and make them amenable to urban life and work (cf. Foucault 1975). In his own words, Écochard saw his task as one of "acclimatizing" rural migrants to the "foreignness" of urban life, and called his type of housing developments *évolutif* as it was meant to eventually form "fully evolved" modern inhabitants (Avermaete 2010b: 91). It is not clear if Écochard's vision of an 'organically evolving community' also took into account the growth of the grid's families. But as households expanded demographically, the grid grew vertically, each added house floor a layer in the palimpsest that tells the story of the community's expansion and rooting in the neighbourhood. As mentioned in the previous chapter, Écochard's grid proved to be a very successful framework for urban development, which is made evident by its spread across Morocco, as well as the continued interest it elicits from scholars the world over (Cohen and Eleb 2002, von Osten 2010, Chaouni 2011, Avermaete and Casciato 2014). Most of the time, however, the grid seems to exist in a void where it is celebrated in isolation from the reality it gave birth to.

My first encounter with a photograph of the grid was in the documentation of an exhibit on Modernist architectural experiments in North Africa, but a simple internet search will yield numerous copies of that photograph featured as part of online articles and archival databases on the Modernist movement. Seldom do these articles also contain images of what the grid has evolved into sixty years later.[74] During my time in Casablanca, I attended several events where I was struck by how the retrospective gaze of historical scholars and heritage preservation discourses contributed to what I argue is a fetishization of the grid. As part of Casamémoire's public lectures and heritage training events that I attended between 2013 and 2014 (see Chapter 1), the grid was frequently presented and admiringly discussed. These presentations were always delivered in an introductory style that assumed the audience had no previous knowledge of the grid, and always had the air of well-practiced performances. Projected numerous times as part of

[74] An exception is the recent volume published by the Canadian Centre for Architecture, which collects some of the main material on the development of affordable housing in Hay Mohammadi alongside a re-visiting of the city of Chandigarh. The volume features the ubiquitous archival imagery of the grid and *Carrières Centrales* as well as photographs of Hay Mohammadi taken in 2013 by Yto Barada, a French-Moroccan contemporary artist. See Avermaete and Casciato (2014).

slide-show presentations, the grid seemed to project a ghostly presence whose materiality eluded grasping, or was selectively occluded from heritage discussions. Seductive in its geometrical simplicity, divorced from the complex contexts in which it was born and which in its turn gave birth to, Écochard's grid was a central part of the heritage narrative constructed around Hay Mohammadi by Casamémoire, as well as a key aspect of Casablanca's claim to Modernist fame.

The retrospective gaze of heritage enthusiasts that participated in the production of this fetishization was epitomized in a visit I attended as part of Casamémoire's training sessions. On a chilly morning in February 2013, I joined a group of volunteer guides-in-training on a visit of Hay Mohammadi. Together with a mix of Moroccan and French university students in their twenties I followed behind our guide for the day, himself also a student at the architecture school in Rabat. Youness had been trained as a guide two years before, and he was leading us towards what he called "one of the last original" Écochard grid homes. Occupying the corner of two narrow streets, the ground floor house at which he stopped had whitewashed walls, three small windows and a rusty iron door. From its flat roof sprouted two satellite dishes blemished by rust. People cautiously took out their cameras to snap furtive pictures of this Modernist heritage vestige, as Youness stressed that it might not survive in this form for much longer, indicating the neighbouring houses and their added floors. I pointed out that the house was hardly in its original state since the roof on which stood two satellite dishes had covered the initially open patio. As we moved on, someone in the group expressed their disappointment ("*c'est dommage*") that not even one original grid home had been preserved.

In the same way that a map cannot be a faithful rendering of a territory, Écochard's grid had only been intended as a model, a base structure from which a complex, "organic" reality would spring forth (Écochard 1955). However, through performances such as the lectures already mentioned in Chapter 1 and the guided visit I just described, a particular, idealized version of the grid became reified and fetishized, as the repetitive, self-reinforcing manner in which it was presented made it more real, or interesting, than the urban fabric whose development it had fostered. Within this framework the grid became an 'abstract space' that hovered but did not seem to intersect with the 'real space' of the neighbourhood. In his landmark work, *The Production of Space,* Lefebvre objected to this type of reification by emphasising the conceptual triad of social, material and discursive forces, which constitute any given space (1991). If we consider the ways in which the

representation of Hay Mohammadi as rational charts and grids was used in isolation from its lived reality as well as its modified built forms, we arrive at Lefebvre's conclusion that "each time one of these [three] categories is employed independently of the others, hence reductively, it serves some homogenizing strategy" (1991: 369). In the case of Hay Mohammadi the homogenisation was owed to the practices of heritage and cultural activists, who, as I have shown in Chapter 1, used images like the grid strategically as part of an effort to include Casablanca within the global circuit of Modernist heritage. Ostensibly presented as part of a depoliticized universal modernity, the grid retained a certain eternally promising feature. Deployed by heritage discourses and urban planners, the fetishization of the grid occluded the messiness of its present embodiment. In the hands of heritage practitioners the grid was not only testament to Casablanca's status as a past "laboratory for modernity" (Rabinow 1989). Through its placement at the core of Casamémoire's efforts to preserve Modernist heritage, the grid, it was hoped, could reignite the spirit of modernity and inspire the city's future architects. In its aspirations for the future, however, this vision was rooted in a complicated relationship with the past that obscured the violence of colonial forces and neglected the experiences of both the early inhabitants of the city's margins as well as the neighbourhood's current residents. Furthermore, it ignored the material fabric and rich layers of history represented by the bricks and mortar of the houses sprouted from the grid, an aspect I will return to in the following chapters. In the next part I explore another angle of this engagement with the past, and consider how a memorial map that attempted to bring to light the violence and trauma of the post-colonial era complicates the genealogy of mapping Hay Mohammadi.

The commemorative map

In its role as the most active and visible *jam'iyya* (community welfare organization) in Hay Mohammadi at the time, Initiative Urbaine was invited in 2011 by Casamémoire to participate in a call for projects launched by the Equity and Reconciliation Commission (ERC), supported by the Moroccan National Human Rights Council and funded by the European Union. As mentioned in the previous chapter, following the release of its report in 2006, the commission opened a call for projects as part of the process enacting community reparations. By 2010 a process of individual reparations had already taken place, wherein the commission recognized the claims of 9,779 victims of Hassan II's repressive regime, and had disbursed financial restitutions to 90 per cent of them, totalling

$70 million (Slyomovics 2009). Susan Slyomovics (2005a, 2005b, 2008) and Bettina Dennerlein (2012) have provided important and extensive accounts of this process. In collaboration with Slyomovics, Fatna El Bouih, who was held and tortured at the Derb Moulay Cheriff commissariat in Hay Mohammadi, has brought her story of political violence to an international audience in the autobiographical account of her imprisonment, *Talk of Darkness* (2008).

Community reparations on the other hand have received less attention, mostly because their exact form seemed to be open to interpretation and in most cases entailed longer time scales. Community reparations can take different forms,[75] but in Morocco the ERC's recommendations defined this as "funding for projects proposed by communities that were previously deliberately excluded from development programmes for political reasons."[76] The call for projects was therefore seen as a way to carry out collective reparation and rehabilitate regions that had been targeted by and suffered from state abuse during the period known as the 'Years of Lead', or what Fatna El Bouih referred to in the previous chapter as state-directed 'ghettoization'. Hay Mohammadi was the only urban *territoire touché* (wounded territory) – the terminology employed by the ERC report – out of a total of thirteen, mostly rural areas. The project submitted by Casamémoire and the *jam'iyya* for consideration was titled *Traces d'espaces, histoire, mémoire et patrimoines de Hay Mohammadi*.[77] The funding that was eventually awarded was meant to cover the publishing of a book on the social history of the neighbourhood, the production of a video documentary (already mentioned in Chapter 1), and a commemorative map.

The first time I encountered the commemorative map, it was given to me by a member of Casamémoire's staff alongside other information publications about their activities during a visit to their office early on in my fieldwork. Pausing briefly, she reached for a dozen more maps and handed them to me saying I might pass them on to people I knew or would meet in the neighbourhood. Behind her on a bookshelf stretching from floor to ceiling, tall stacks of the commemorative map still sealed in plastic foil occupied several shelves. Perhaps unwittingly, the commemorative map is itself a grid of

[75] Examples of community-based reparations have included guarantees of non-repetition, provision of social services such as healthcare or education, and symbolic measures such as formal apologies or public commemorations. For a further look at a history of reparations in Morocco as well as other places see Slyomovics (2008).

[76] The ERC followed the recommendations compiled in a written report by the International Centre for Transitional Justice (ICTJ 2009 Report). Available from https://www.ictj.org/publication/rabat-report-concept-and-challenges-collective-reparations

[77] The title of the project translates as 'Traces of spaces, history, memory and heritage(s) of Hay Mohammadi'.

forty pictures each featuring a landmark or *lieu de memoire* of Hay Mohammadi. Conceived as a fold-out map, on the front side there is an actual map pointing to the location of each landmark, albeit in a somewhat inaccurate rendering of the neighbourhood's topography. Abdallah, one of the young members of the *jam'iyya* at the time, was asked to do the graphic design of the map: "They did not give me a proper map to work from so I had to approximate," he defensively told me when I asked him about the inaccuracies. Working together with Professor Najib Takki, a self-described "proud son of Hay Mohammadi" and a professor of history at the Hassan II University in Casablanca, Abdallah assembled the map between late 2011 and the spring of 2012.

Folded up, the map is slightly larger than a pocket-size object, its cover featuring a picture of the housing block that still towers over the infamous Derb Moulay Cheriff underground detention centre. In a box below the title page, a crammed paragraph summarizes in Arabic and in French the context in which the map was created, crediting Casamémoire for its production without any mention of Initiative Urbaine. The neighbourhood association only features through its logo at the bottom of the cover page. Unfolded, the map measures 15 by 30 inches, printed on glossy paper, and alongside the grid of forty photos it lists the name of each landmark in both French and Arabic. The photos differ widely in quality. Although still standing today, some landmarks are depicted by archival, black-and-white photos dating from the 1940s and 1950s. Abdallah told me that he took some of the more recent images himself for the places which they did not have photos or for which the existing photos were of poor quality. On the cartographic side, the location of each 'memory place' in the neighbourhood is shaded in red, with only a couple of road names indicated. Numbers, sometimes larger than the landmark they index, can be used to refer to a duplication of the list containing the names of each site. Two of the sites overlap, while the omission of certain roads frustrates legibility and adds to the feeling that the map's main intended purpose was no to facilitate navigation to these places (see Fig. 6).[78]

As the two people who spent most time on the production of the map, Abdallah and Professor Takki reconstructed for me the process of its creation, but I also spoke to some of the other members of Initiative Urbaine who had been involved in various aspects

[78]According to the documents Casamémoire made available to me, detailing each aspect of the larger *Traces d'espaces* project, several memorial plaques had been planned for installation at several of the memory places, without mentioning which ones. Their exact location had been discussed during a meeting of the steering committee but the plaques were never installed.

of its production, as well as Fatna El Bouih, the activist and former detainee introduced in the previous chapter. In a conversation we had in March 2013 she told me: "I was very impressed with how a small, young, neighbourhood association like them [Initiative Urbaine] carried out the different tasks of the project. We consulted on occasion but the work they did was very impressive." Benefiting from the support and guidance of other well-known former detainees, according to its members, the *jam'iyya* became the main actor in the process of collecting personal narratives from inhabitants, and eventually putting together the commemorative map.

Figure 6. The commemorative map unfolded, front and reverse.

The process of collecting the inhabitants' testimonies took place in 2011 and was organized in the form of *cafés memoire* (memory cafes). One of the *jam'iyya's* members told me how a dozen people with 'important memories' were brought together during several sessions in which they were invited to reminisce about the past. Mostly men, but also a few women from the neighbourhood, took part in the *cafés* held at the *jam'iyya's* locale. Fragments of their recollections also formed the base of the small booklet titled *Mémoire et Dignité* meant to accompany the commemorative map. Abdallah recounted that Professor Takki and other young members of the *jam'iyya* sometimes visited inhabitants in their homes, especially those who were too old or ill to venture into the neighbourhood. On these occasions they collected photos and memorabilia from the inhabitants for the purpose of scanning them and including them in the book. I was curious to learn whether or not the number of memory places had a particular meaning.[79] In one of the longer conversations we had on the topic, Professor Takki explained the process involved in selecting the *lieux de memoire*.

> "Oh, we had a very long list at first, much more than forty. People proposed all sorts of places. But we had to focus on the ones that were historically significant. Of course, we also included the pharmacy and the communal fountain. But places like the Mohammad V Mosque, the detention centre, and then of course, the communal grave for the '81 victims,[80] these were the significant ones. At the same time, speaking with people from Casamémoire, we decided we would follow three axes: colonial resistance, Derb Moulay Cheriff, and urbanism. Which is why we also included the *Nid d'Abeille* and *Semiramis* buildings."

Professor Takki added his own choices to this list and curated the suggestions that had been made by people in the *cafés memoire,* while Abdallah tried to keep in everyone's mind the constraints of the final printing layout. In its final form, therefore, the map and its *lieux de memoire* was influenced by both logistical practicalities as well as Professor Takki and Casamémoire's curatorial vision.

In the paragraph printed below the map's title page, it is specified that the map was created by Casamémoire, but that the *lieux* (sites) were chosen in collaboration with the

[79] The number forty is used in Christian, Jewish, and Islamic tradition to represent symbolic meanings (Schimmel 1994). In the case of the commemorative map, however, neither Professor Takki nor any of the other participants I spoke with mentioned the choice as having religious symbolism.
[80] The victims of the 1981 so-called 'Bread Riots' had been buried in a communal grave on the edge of the neighbourhood, in the vicinity of the old Jewish cemetery. In 2007 the grave was transformed into a monument with a dedicated plaque.

inhabitants for their "historical, social, architectural, heritage and sometimes simply sentimental value."[81] When Pierre Nora developed the concept of *lieux de memoire*, it was in reaction to what he saw as the demise of French national memory. In his definition, a *lieu de memoire* is a meaningful entity of a real or imagined kind, which has become a symbolic element of a given community as a result of human will or the effect of time (Nora 1989). The memory places included on the commemorative map of Hay Mohammadi can also be described as falling within these two categories. While some are the product of both human agency and the passage of time, the curatorial process clearly reveals that the work of the mapmakers' particular agency sought to re-enforce and in some cases establish specific memory places that fit the three axes they had proposed to follow.

On several occasions I also tried to engage those members of Casamémoire who had participated in the process. Although it appeared to me that Professor Takki and the *jam'iyya* had done most of the research work, I was told by one of Casamémoire's project leaders at the time to contact one particular senior member, since the map had been "his brain-child". When, after several attempts, I finally got an appointment with the architect in question, the meeting resulted in a fruitless hour-long wait at his office, and an (unfulfilled) promise from his assistant that they would get in touch about rescheduling. Although it is not uncommon in Morocco, as in other places, to encounter difficulties in approaching so-called 'important people', these failed attempts seemed to reveal significant aspects about the different roles played by each partner as part of the project collaboration.

In 2011 Casamémoire was already an established and respected organization in Casablanca, whose members were either French or part of the Moroccan elite, both fluent in the language of international funding applications and human rights discourse. As such, they had the social and cultural capital necessary for attracting and securing international and local funding and support for projects focused on local memory and heritage. On the other hand, they lacked the local contacts that Professor Takki, but especially Initiative Urbaine could access and mobilize. According to Abdeljalil Bakkar, the acting president of the *jamiyya* at the time, the partnership also greatly benefitted the association. "That was the first big project we were part of, the first European Union funded project, and it was a great learning experience for us. It also helped us become more visible in the NGO

[81] My own translation from the French.

world, and for a small neighbourhood association from Hay Mohammadi that was a really important step." Although some of the *jam'iyya* staff members were not always content with the distribution of responsibility as part of these collaborations, as Amina's statement in the previous chapter showed, they believed that the impact on both their jobs and the association as a whole was a positive one. In fact, since then the *jam'iyya* seemed to have become the 'go to' place for outside actors who wanted to work in the neighbourhood, something I return to and explore in more depth in Chapter 4.

When I first showed the staff at the *jam'iyya* the stack of maps I had been given by Casamémoire, they were amused. Opening a storage closet, one of the project coordinators pointed to their own piles of folded maps and said: "Why didn't you ask me? I could have given you some as well." Seeming to anticipate my question about why they had not distributed the maps more widely in the area, the director stepped in and said: "We should leave some of them out at the entrance for visitors to pick up." He then instructed some of the volunteers to pin a map to the information board. For a while I could not understand why the fruits of a project that so many people found enriching were left to languish and gather dust on the shelves of various associations. Although I believed that the intentions behind these actions had been genuine, and that the work done by these partnerships for the purpose of historical accountability and restorative justice was a crucial one, the sight of those stacks begged the question: who had the map been made for, and to what extent had the community actually been involved in and benefitted from this aspect of the reconciliation process? Several members of the *jam'iyya* who had worked on the project at the time remembered it as the first time they had heard about the traumatic events of the post-colonial era, because their parents never discussed this at home. Since one of the aims of the commemorative project had been to give more visibility to the social history of the neighbourhood, already in the process of producing the map a transfer of knowledge about the past had taken place among a small group of inhabitants.

However, when I later showed the map to other friends and interlocutors in the neighbourhood who did not have contact with the *jam'iyya* and had never heard of the commemorative activities, I was struck by two things. One was the relative ease with which the map and other memorializing actions could have been popularized in a neighbourhood that is densely populated and closely knit. The other was the way in which people's current everyday concerns became linked to the markers of the past, so that the communal fountain, a former flour mill, or a pharmacy were more keenly appraised than

those landmarks obviously laden with political symbolism. Some people, although having lived their whole life in the neighbourhood, were unfamiliar with many of these latter kind of landmarks. At the same time, those same people were aware and genuinely proud of the neighbourhood's identity as the home to important historical struggles. As they would often say, *al hay muhim bezzaf*, meaning the neighbourhood is very important.

In her analysis of the afterlife of colonial *lieux de memoire* in Algiers, Zeynep Celik looks at how postcolonial Algerian female writers have managed to take a key colonial *lieu de memoire* such as Delacroix's famous Orientalist painting *Femmes d'Alger dans leur appartement* (1834), and complicate it by twisting it into a distorting mirror, which uses the present to refract new light on the past and vice-versa (2002: 162). Similarly, on their encounter with the commemorative map and its landmarks my interlocutors in Hay Mohammadi would weave complicated connections between the past and the present. In one instance, upon seeing the picture of his quarter on the map, Hakim, a retired labourer in his sixties and one of the inhabitants of the SOCICA worker housing complex, told me that those homes sometimes felt like a prison that reminded him of the repetitive factory work he used to do and the financial struggles he felt trapped by in the present. This metaphor was frequently mentioned by other inhabitants I eventually spoke with during my fieldwork, who also made reference to the torture cells of the Derb Moulay Cheriff detention centre which, like many others, Hakim suspected stretched under their feet.[82]

But if the mundane concerns of the present could be related to the material conditions of the past, the way in which the political realities, struggles and traumas of that same era were presented by the commemorative map seemed to prevent them from being viewed as part of the same contingent sequence of events that also produced the present. In other words, the closing of the infamous detention centre and the possibility of producing the map seemed to foreclose any potential discussion about the continued practice of police corruption, arbitrary arrests (see Chapter 4), limits on freedom of speech, and occasional disappearances of those involved in the Moroccan equivalent of the Arab Spring (cf. Bogaert 2011). This was re-enforced by the fact that initial proposals for turning the Derb Moulay Cheriff detention centre into a memorial museum had been

[82] The underground detention centre is discussed in more detail in the previous chapter. Although closed after the release of the ERC's report on human rights' abuses, the centre has not been opened to the public, a situation that helps to feed rumours in the neighbourhood about the extent of the space taken up by the subterranean torture cells.

stalled or simply left to fade into oblivion by the Moroccan authorities (Slyomovics 2012). Furthermore, the relatively swift and uncomplicated making of the map inscribed the individual as well as collective experience of trauma within a clear template for narratives about that experience, leaving little room for ambiguities and lacunae, an aspect I will return to in the next section.

Fatna El Bouih had mentioned in one of our conversations the difficulties of assembling a social history of trauma, and that the work done for the *Traces d'espaces* project had been one of gathering "shards of forgetting" (*fragments de l'oubli*) rather than complete memories. Noted in other contexts of post-conflict reparations, the act of remembering is often not a heroic gesture, but that which slips out in moments when the "tyranny of habitual forgetting" relaxes a bit (Watson 1994: 48). As Maurice Halbwachs argued in his trenchant account of how societies remember, it is important to take into account the social context within which any act of remembering occurs (1992[1952]). All the more so, I would argue, in the context of memories of state violence. Thus, the entire process of the *cafés memoire* and the making of the commemorative map have to be considered within the broader political and social frameworks that allowed for their occurrence. Significantly, the frameworks within which the work done for and by the map existed were inscribed by a specific form of politics of commemoration as well as the pragmatics of NGO funding cycles. The latter is often cited as the main challenge to meaningful project implementation and sustainable outcomes in the nongovernmental sector (Gent et al. 2014). Routinely, project funding cycles do not extend beyond a maximum of two years, which was one of the constraints Abdallah and Professor Takki also cited as a reason for the limited number of inhabitants included in the *cafes memoire*.

The pragmatics of funding cycles also affected the enactment of commemoration activities. Indeed, based on the accounts of those involved in the *Traces d'espaces* project, structural constraints such as limited time and money meant that performative aspects seemed to be prioritized over competing concerns, such as depth of engagement and reaching a wider audience. Susan Slyomovics notes in her book *The Performance of Human Rights in Morocco* (2005a), how beginning in the 1990s former detainees and human rights activists had begun to hold vigils, public testimonies, poetry readings and mock-trials as a way to open up a public space for the discussion of human rights abuses in Morocco. These performances contributed greatly to the eventual establishment of the ERC, but also seem to have engendered a new performative register, wherein enacting the

required steps to show that community reparations were being made seemed to be as important as the reparations themselves. With an almost ritualistic eye for detail and documentation, a body of evidence had been produced about the *Traces d'espaces* activities, whereby meetings had been photographed and press conferences had been held to present the commemorative map to the press. Significantly fewer efforts had been invested in distributing this object of memorialisation to the inhabitants. In this instance, the non-circulation of an object and its limited trajectory could also be considered revealing of the power dynamics involved in the production and construction of social history (cf. Appadurai 1986).

As to the politics of commemoration, within the framework of communal reparations often-times the visual language of human-rights violations takes precedence over the more mundane representations of material deprivation and the much harder to depict forms of structural violence (Farmer 2004). However, the makers of the map seemed to focus minimally on the torture landmarks, giving considerably more space to the markers of the independence struggle, while finally also including more mundane places "simply [for their] sentimental value". At the same time, the breadth and depth of engagement that could be supported within the timeline of an NGO funding cycle was necessarily limited, forcing those involved to make certain editorial choices, as Professor Takki mentioned. These editorial choices, though, took on a life of their own, as their proliferation and circulation signalled towards the creation of a new hegemonic account of Hay Mohammadi's collective memory. In the following section I consider how the creation of a game-board based on the commemorative map continued the genealogy of mapping Hay Mohammadi, this time from a ludic perspective.

The game-board

I could not believe my luck when I met Meryem, a graphic designer in her late twenties (already introduced in Chapter 1), with a project to create a game for children based on the commemorative map. It was a late afternoon towards the end of May 2013 when Meryem walked into the main office at the *jamʿiyya* in Hay Mohammadi. She had planned to meet with the association's director to discuss how they might collaborate for the production of a game-board that Meryem was designing. We exchanged contact information and soon after we met at a café of her choice, as I was eager to learn about her idea. With time I realised that not only was our meeting not a surprising coincidence, but that it was

inscribed in and emerged from the same network of actors and initiatives that spun a web of heritage and cultural activities around the neighbourhood. Meeting Meryem brought into relief the relationships that governed some of the most visible ways in which the neighbourhood was being (re)presented both to outsiders and inhabitants.

When I first met her, Meryem was hoping to complete a Master's degree in communication and design within the year. The game-board, she explained, was going to be her final project and the last requirement before graduating. The idea had grown out of a group project for an interactive website submitted in response to an open competition launched by Casamémoire in 2011 as part of that year's *Journées de Patrimoine* festival. When the proposal was chosen as the winning entry, Meryem decided to improve it and began collecting more information about each historical site. She interviewed Professor Takki several times, and, inspired by the commemorative map, turned the website into a game-board. Meryem recounted that during 2012 she had contacted Casamémoire several times about further documentation, to no avail. At one point, she said, Casamémoire insinuated that she leave the game-board with them in exchange for the documentation. I could not verify this with Casamémoire, but Meryem told me that after that incident she decided to register a patent for the game in her name and continue working independently.

One year later, in 2013, when she decided to use the game as her final project, she contacted Casamémoire once again about the historical documentation, because, she said, she wanted the project to be accurate and thoroughly executed if she was to submit it towards her degree. When her attempts proved unsuccessful she reached out to the *jam'iyya*, thinking they could intervene on her behalf. Initiative Urbaine's director proved eager to help Meryem and, after several meetings, they decided on a collaboration, which would involve allowing Meryem to test the game with some of the children who attended afternoon activities at the *jam'iyya*. On the agreed upon date, Meryem brought a test version of the game printed on a 15 by 15 inch paper.

The game-board featured a grid made up of fifty-five squares, including the *start* and *finish* boxes. To the forty landmarks taken from the commemorative map that were now represented with soft cartoonish edges, Meryem had added 'trap' squares drawn as skulls, as well as 'booster' ones represented by means of transport such as the new tramway, a bus or a red *petit* taxi. As the children made astonished sounds and jostled to get a better look of the colourful board, Meryem explained the rules behind the game, which were relatively straightforward. Based on the principles of the ubiquitous *Snakes*

and ladders, [83] the Hay Mohammadi game allowed for five players, who had to move their pawns along the numbered squares of the grid according to the number they rolled with the dice. Their advance would be helped by a 'booster' square or hindered by a 'trap' square. The rest of the squares had been arranged in no particular chronological or thematic order. The game ended when one of the players reached the final square. The children visibly enjoyed the game, and Meryem asked them if they would change anything about it. She proposed that the game might be played until a second or a third place was decided, but the children thought that was unnecessary. After thanking the *jam'iyya* and the children, Meryem told me she was content with how the test had gone, and was thinking of organizing a public 'play event' to showcase the game to the community.

The summer of 2013 came and went, and neither the *jam'iyya* nor I heard back from Meryem, though that was not unusual given that most people travelled during and after Ramadan. One of the *jam'iyya* members thought Meryem might have abandoned the idea of a public showcase. During one of our meetings Meryem had told me that once she began to research Hay Mohammadi's history and heritage she became genuinely interested in the ludic potential for engaging with an otherwise difficult history of suffering. At the same time, she was also concerned that the topic of a game-board using landmarks associated with state-violence might be controversial. Several times she told me that she had been uneasy delving into such recent events, and that although the monarchy, through the Equity and Reconciliation commission, had made it possible to discuss this history she was unsure her university evaluators would feel the same.[84] However, a few months later, in September, Meryem called me and said she had been trying to get a sponsor for the game, but had eventually decided to use her own savings and was indeed still planning to stage the public play event in mid-October.

Meryem called the event *Hay Mohammadi, Une histoire en jeu* which could be translated as either "a playful history" or "a history at stake". After several more setbacks Meryem finally booked the theatre space at the *Dar Shabab* (Youth centre) in Hay Mohammadi. The location was symbolic, as the *Dar Shabab* was one of the landmarks

[83] *Snakes and Ladders* is an ancient Indian board game that is considered nowadays a world-wide classic. The game is made up of a grid of numbered squares, and several snakes and ladders respectively hinder or help the players' progress from square one to the finishing line.

[84] Despite the official reconciliation process and the publishing of the commission's report, many people remained reluctant to speak of or address in an active manner the historical events covered by the report. My main interlocutors considered this to be a function of the 'sanction-free' approach of the ERC's report that decided to not prosecute the perpetrators of human-rights violations. As Slyomovics shows, this has led to a situation where former detainees may encounter their torturers in everyday life (2009).

represented on both the commemorative map and the game-board, and was considered by many residents to be a reminder of the fervent political and cultural activism of the 1960s. In 2013 the *Dar Shabab* in Hay Mohammadi was just another local youth centre that lacked funding and human resources.[85] However, this reality was momentarily glossed over, as the staging of the event took precedence.

Meryem had managed to secure the logistical support of Initiative Urbaine for the event, and an hour before the first guests were expected, together with staff from the *jam'iyya* I headed to the venue, accompanied by the twenty neighbourhood children who were supposed to test-play the game. Audio-visual equipment was being installed as we arrived, and Meryem had already arranged the chairs in a semicircle around the game-board, the latter having been printed in bright colours on a large plastic mat measuring 2 by 2 meters (Fig. 7). A banner bearing the name of the event was hung across one of the walls (Fig. 8), and tables were being set up at the back of the room for a small tea and cake buffet. Meryem was visibly anxious because she had still not managed to obtain the documentation she needed from Casamémoire, but I tried to assure her that things would go well. The children diligently took their seats on the right hand side of the semicircle, and soon more guests began to arrive. The list of people Meryem had invited included the former militants and detainees she had interviewed for her Master's project, including Fatna El Bouih, but also Professor Takki, as well as members of Casamémoire. The *jam'iyya* had also asked all their members and employees to attend, a request that was met with reluctance by some, as the event fell on a holiday right after the *Eid al Adha* (feast of the sacrifice). Meryem had also invited a crew from the public television channel 2M, who filmed part of the event and interviewed Meryem and several participants.

It was soon clear that Meryem had invested an enormous amount of work and resources in organising the event. Opening the occasion was a violin recital by an older man from the neighbourhood. This was followed by the reading of a poem dedicated to the martyrs of the neighbourhood and accompanied by an oud player.[86] After this prelude, Meryem nervously took the microphone and introduced herself and the game as both

[85] Although 252 nongovernmental organizations were registered under its umbrella at the time, there were seldom any activities for neighbourhood youth at the *Dar Shabab* – a reason why many of them attended Initiative Urbaine and other community centres that managed to support themselves through foreign funds. Also see Yasmine Berriane (2010).

[86] The victims of the struggle for independence were commonly referred to as the local martyrs, and the Echouhada Avenue had been named in their honor. Occasionally, local residents also referred to the victims of Hassan II's regime as martyrs.

concept and object, welcomed everyone and then handed the proceedings over to the moderator.

Figure 7. The mat-size test game laid out before the event. October 2013. Picture by the author.

Figure 8. Event banner reads: "Hay Mohammadi: A Playful History. Play and discover Hay Mohammadi". Picture by the author.

A group of five girls were called over from the audience. As the children began to play, the moderator commented their actions to the audience, and each time they would land on

a landmark on the board he would encourage the elders in the audience to help the children with information about the place. The game moved at a fast pace, and soon another group of five children went up to play. Overall, the children seemed to enjoy the novelty of pretending to be life-sized pawns, hopping in stocking feet on the colourful surface of the game-board. They delighted in rolling the giant dice, and shrieked with laughter when the foamy cubes dropped on the head of one of their friends. Towards the end of the second round of play the comments of the neighbourhood veterans began to lengthen and as Meryem stepped in to respond to them it became clear that we had moved into the 'Question and Answer' section. The kids took their seats and distracted themselves by using an A4 sized version of the game. Covering the names of places drawn in each box, they tested each other in the knowledge of what each cartoon version of a landmark represented.

The discussion between the elders and Meryem had everyone respectfully listening, although some of the *jam'iyya* staff had stepped outside, and some of the teenaged youth were milling about in the back. The main point of contention seemed to be over some of the details describing the historical significance of several landmarks. Meryem had not had the time to print information cards for each landmark as she had intended, so she was using several sheets of paper from which she read. Professor Takki took the microphone and together with another former detainee stressed, among other things, the importance of remembering the martyrs of the independence struggle as well as the survivors of the 'Years of Lead'. Their intervention was impassioned, blending information about the significance of the *Dar Shabab* with mentions of social gatherings at Cinema Saada.[87] Others in the audience were nodding and it seemed that several people were keen on joining the conversation. Before they could participate, though, the moderator wrapped up the conversation and invited everyone to enjoy the coffee and cake buffet. The children were getting restless and the *jam'iyya* staff were also eager to go home. Meryem herself looked tense with anxiety, asking me repeatedly if I thought the event had gone well. I told her I thought it had and agreed to send her the pictures I had taken.

[87] Cinema Saada, is one of two cinema halls built in Hay Mohammadi in the 1950s, the other being Cinema Cheriff, in the Derb Moulay Cheriff quarter. Featured on the commemorative map, both cinemas are in an advanced state of degradation and have been closed for more than a decade. Most inhabitants of Hay Mohammadi consider Cinema Saada to be a landmark of the rich counter culture that thrived in the neighbourhood during the terror period of the 'Years of Lead'.

During the time that I worked in Hay Mohammadi, and Casablanca, I attended many similar cultural and civil society events, and began to notice the way in which their ritualistic staging was as crucial as the topics to be discussed or debated. Within this framework, the details of the play-event become significant if we consider the game-board to be part of the same cultural economy as the commemorative map and the heritage talks. The performative aspects involved in the play-event abided by a set of rules that governed similar events, whose ritualistic execution ensured its success and lent it weight. As such, the serving of tea and cakes, aside from being a simple way of showing hospitality, became crucial to inscribing the event within a certain sphere of legitimacy and officialdom. On an occasion where the *jam'iyya* had failed to provide refreshments at a workshop, the director had berated the staff for making the *jam'iyya* seem amateur. The power of the performance for staging reality is also evident if we consider the fact that in the months that followed the play-event, there was no follow up to concretise plans for production and distribution of the game to schools in Hay Mohammadi, as had been proposed by the director of the *jam'iyya* during the event. The event in itself was sufficient for establishing that positive actions were being taken in and for the neighbourhood, regardless of their impact or sustainability. Meryem, who had hoped to monetize her project by turning it into a serially produced game to be sold "all over Morocco" (she'd hoped), was also disappointed in the end that the costly staging of the play-event did not generate her desired outcome.

Clearly thinking they were of a mind, Meryem later told me she had been upset by the ambivalent feedback and criticism she received from the neighbourhood veterans. When I met with her after the event she was still bothered by what had happened. In her view, she had worked with information they had given her, and had consulted repeatedly with many of the people who criticized her execution of the idea. "I just don't understand. If they thought the information was not accurate or good why didn't they tell me before, when I interviewed them?" Professor Takki, in particular, had told her he was disappointed to see that someone studying communication had not included better information describing each landmark. As the elders themselves demonstrated, however, their recollections were not fixed but altered slightly with each telling. After the event I had also struggled to understand the tension it had generated. In James Corner's work, a game-board can function as a map "for playing out potential futures" (1999: 243). In the case of the Hay Mohammadi game, alternative understandings of the past could have

joined that potentiality, although in the post-game discussions the concern had been for fine-tuning practiced narratives. Corner goes on to argue that in the case of a contested territory, the map as game-board can enable "otherwise adversarial groups to find common ground" in their disputes, allowing for more direct personal engagement (1999: 240). However, despite some of the more passionate responses I witnessed that day, none of the people who took part in the event could be thought of as adversarial, tied as they were by their mutual friendships, preoccupations with memory and its preservation, and membership in the same cultural and professional circles.

And in fact the game-board's launch had not been staged as an attempt at building consensus, but an occasion to re-enforce previously agreed upon truths. Instead, the dispute that led to the confrontational discussions on that day seemed to be bred out of a struggle for recognition and the need to be heard. As Harry West's work with survivors of torture during Mozambique's war for independence from the Portuguese attests (2003), such victims often struggle to find a public discursive space for speaking and making sense of their traumatic experience. West reports that the victims "felt a persistent need to tell of what had been done to them", while at the same time "they apparently found narrating the violence done to them recurrently unsatisfying" (2003: 357). Similarly, I would argue that the elders who had taken issue with Meryem's game board were in fact trying to take advantage of a rare opportunity to retell their experience and perhaps try to re-inscribe it in the community's public memory, demanding recognition of their authority over the telling of this painful part of local history, while perhaps feeling frustrated by the narrative form imposed by the game.

A game-board approach towards mapping, Corner argued, acknowledges that cities are dynamic and comprise a range of 'players', who rework the space of representation with each play. But if in Corner's view the potential of the map as game-board lies in its ability to provide an "open-ended generative structure" which can constantly evolve (1999: 243), the Hay Mohammadi game seemed to be construed by most stakeholders (perhaps with the exception of the children) as a closed narrative loop. As it was made clear by those who spoke on the occasion, the common view was that each play of the game should re-enforce and inculcate in the children an accurate knowledge of the significant events its landmarks mapped out. Meryem herself saw the game as a communication tool for passing on to younger generations a certified story about the recent past. After all, she had chosen a grandfatherly figure guiding a young boy to

illustrate the poster for the event (Fig. 8), and had even hoped to convince the event's moderator to costume himself similarly (which did not happen).

In the end, Meryem's conception of the game cannot be a *game-board* in Corner's understanding. Although informed by an ethnographic attention to lived history, it attempted to do away with the diversity of the biographies of those who lived it. In Corner's view the richness of the game-board as map lies in its designer's ability to engage "the various imaginations of all the relevant parties" (1999: 243). Despite the lively debate it generated, the game-board's mission was ultimately seen by members of the commemorative and heritage circles as just another document supporting officially sanctioned narratives about the neighbourhood. This was done at the expense of "less usable pasts" (Allan 2013: 133), as Meryem avoided instigating new forms of interaction or helping to explore alternative angles to the neighbourhood's social history. Its trajectory always the same, the game left little room to the player's imagination, as its linear map unravelled the same version of events. However, the potential of its ludic dimension remains open and, perhaps, if and when the game will reach a wider audience, a plurality of readings, uses and imaginations might still emerge.

Subjective cartographies

"*Unlike tracings, which propagate redundancies, mappings discover new worlds within past and present ones; they inaugurate new grounds upon the hidden traces of a living context.*"

- James Corner (1999: 214)

"I don't really know how to draw, though", was the response that most people offered when I asked if they would be interested in drawing me a map of their neighbourhood. Inspired by Kevin Lynch's approach in his now iconic *Image of the city* (1960), I encouraged my friends and collaborators to draw me maps of how they saw and experienced space in Hay Mohammadi. Some were keener on the exercise than others, while a couple refused outright, suspicious of my intentions. I explained to everyone I approached with the proposition that I was interested in learning which places, streets, paths and landmarks they felt strongly towards (positively or negatively) in the neighbourhood. I stressed the fact that they did not need to be accurate maps, in the sense of an objective representation of space. In fact, I wanted their very subjective interpretation on paper. I did not care if the street lines they drew were straight or crooked.

The only limitation was the edge of the paper. I repeatedly prodded by saying: "draw me anything about the neighbourhood, your home, your favourite shop, your childhood path to school. Anything."

If traditionally maps had been put in the service of official attempts at survey and control, the Situationists showed us how to "return the map" to the everyday practitioners of the city by focusing on unexplored, "repressed topographies of the city" (Corner 1999: 232). As a group of artists and activist working in the 1950s and 1960s in Paris, the Situationists drew on everyday life situations to promote direct action and disrupt entrenched forms of power and control. Inspired by this vision, mapping has been used to empower marginalized groups – such as slum dwellers in the Global South – and to attempt wrestling power away from the state (cf. Kumar 2008, Patel and Baptist 2012). Corner speaks of how the "agency of mapping", as opposed to map-making, rests neither in its ability to reproduce nor impose realities, but rather in re-imaging and re-imagining a given territory in new and diverse ways (1999: 213). Drawing on this tradition of alternative mappings, while at the same time cautious of its more idealistic aspirations, my own attempt to collect subjective cartographies was driven by the desire to see how the inhabitants' perceptions and visions might contest and destabilize the monolithic image of the neighbourhood. Having shown the commemorative map to my closest interlocutors in Hay Mohammadi and finding that many of the landmarks that were central to how the area was being (re)presented to officials and outsiders were marginal to most people's lives, I wanted to see what a 'mundane' map of the neighbourhood might look like (cf. Turkle 2007). I was also curious to see if and how my friends' and collaborators' drawings might incorporate official narratives, as well as the contingent, messy, and temporal aspects of their experience, into novel representations of the urban margins.

As I mention in the Introduction to this dissertation, I also saw this exercise as a method for accessing a different kind of knowledge about the everyday experience of neighbourhood space. Encouraging people to draw and talk about their favourite grocer, or bread seller, the place where they had ice-cream as children, the fastest way to walk to work, opened up a trove of corporeal memories stored in the moving body and accessed through the gliding of a pen on paper (Ingold 2000, 2007). Most of all, I wanted to explore cognitive mapping as a way of accessing a detailed and diverse sense of inhabitants' affective and social memories (cf. Jacob 2005). It should then come as no surprise that the circumstances and subjective cartographies which resulted from this playful and creative

exercise vary widely. All those who agreed to participate drew the maps in my presence, but some chose to do so swiftly while others took their time and immersed themselves in the process, pulling me into their experience of creative flow. In the ethnographic material that follows I try to recount some of these occasions and provide the context for these evocative subjective maps. I follow the presentation of each map and the context of its making with an analysis of the different aspects of neighbourhood social and physical spaces they evoke.

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Sara N.'s map

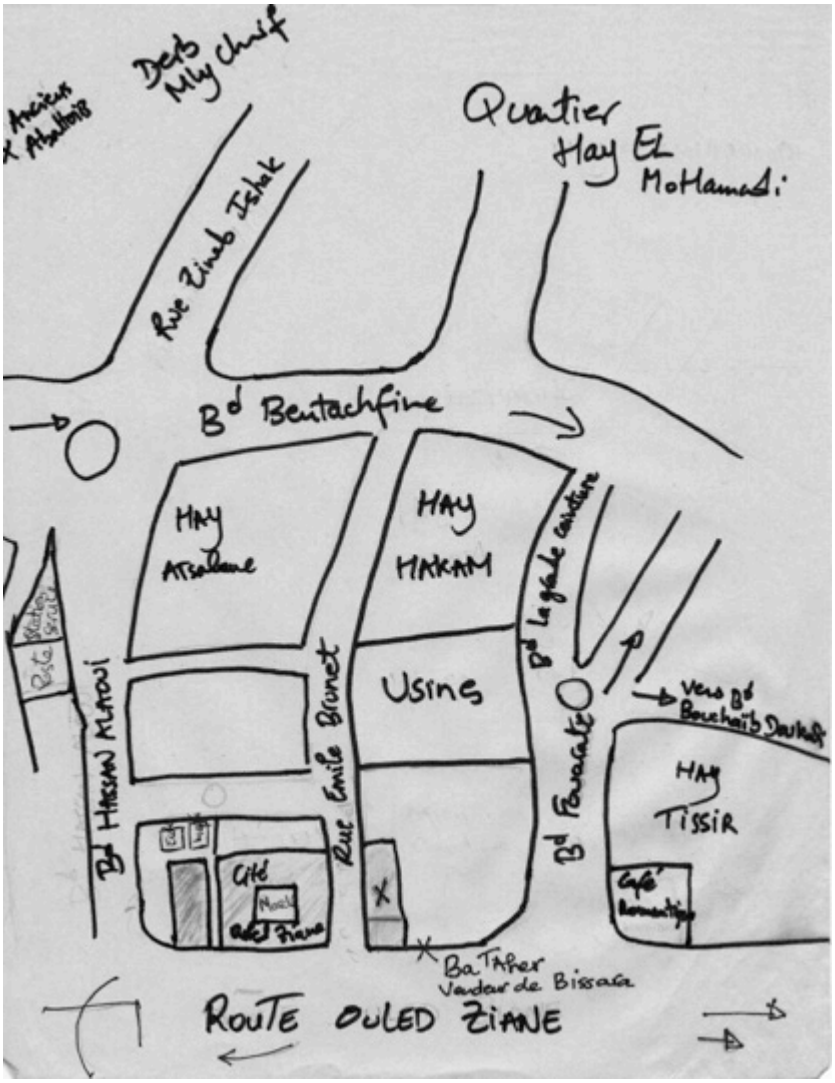

Figure 9. Sara N.'s map.

One remarkably hot afternoon in September 2013, I was headed to Sara's house for the first mapping exercise I would conduct in the field. I had met Sara a few months earlier through common friends who were involved in an artistic project concerned with recycling trash in Hay Mohammadi. In her early twenties, studying to become an environmental scientist, Sara was a wonderfully warm and engaging young woman, and she considered my questions about the neighbourhood and her impressions of it with more care and seriousness than any of the other people I had spoken with.

Sara met me at the bus stop and guided me across the three-lane highway of the Route Ouled Ziane to her family's apartment. Her home was part of the residential complex Cité Ouled Ziane, a middle-class housing project similar to the Dar Lamane estate further north, but much smaller in size. Her parents had actually lived near Dar Lamane for a few years, she told me, while waiting for their home to be built. Entering the estate together, I could immediately feel the din of the highway die down and the air change as a small patch of fig trees managed to cool the ambient temperature. Inside the apartment the air was also nicely cool, and after bringing out a tray of tea and cookies Sara gave me a short tour of the carefully decorated two-bedroom home. Both of Sara's parents were employed full-time in what could be generically described as white-collar jobs in Casablanca's downtown. Not having met them at the time, Sara described them as 'open' and 'modern' people (employing the French *à l'esprit ouvert* and *modernes*). She supported her claim by telling me how her parents trusted her enough to let her organize her own free time, and socialize with male peers as part of university clubs and hiking outings. While Sara had commuted alone by public bus starting with her primary school studies, her sister, who was due back from school that afternoon, attended a secondary school attached to the housing complex.

As we sat down on a low couch, Sara began to tell me about the map she had been trying to sketch before my arrival. Her main frustration was that she could not get the names and placement of the main roads and boulevards right, and giving me a mischievous smile she asked if she could look them up on the Internet. We both burst into laughter as I reminded her that I was not trying to test her knowledge of road names. Instead, I asked her to tell me about the things that she had already confidently placed on her map (Fig. 9).

Her home, which she proceeded to shade in purple and mark with an X, sat at the lower edge of her map, the edge of Hay Mohammadi, as it were, and to emphasise that she

wrote "*Quartier Hay El Mohammadi*" (Hay Mohammadi neighbourhood) near the top of the page. "I was born in Hay Mohammadi", she told me, differentiating between the old core of the neighbourhood and the area where she currently lived, which although administratively part of the same district (*arrondissement*) was more commonly referred to as "Ouled Ziane", because of its vicinity with the eponymous inter-city bus station. Right on the corner, Sara added another cross for Ba Taher, the *bissara* (fava bean) soup salesman saying: "He has the best *bissara* in all of Casablanca! He comes out in the evening and people crowd around to buy a warm bowl. I've seen people pull up in BMW's and Porsches for a bowl of Ba Taher's soup. You can smell it from a distance, and it's as delicious as it smells!" As she spoke she continued to shade certain areas, or re-enforce the lines of the road and landmarks already drawn, almost lost in a reverie, as she considered what else she might reveal to me about the neighbourhood.

> "Behind the wall where Ba Taher sets up his stall, in that empty field there, you can find stolen things. Someone found their stolen bike there once, because some of the homeless youth around the bus station stash their things there. Sometimes they also sleep there. One year before Eid al Adha there was also a small herd of sheep on that plot. But in general it is quite calm around here."

I asked Sara if there were any places in the area where she went to hang out with her friends. "Not really. If I want to go out to a café I go downtown, to Maarif or Gautier (neighbourhoods). You can't go around here. *Il y a que de cafés à moustachus* (There are only cafes for moustached men).[88] Except, there is one café that is very famous and young people go there as well. The Café Romantique!" According to Sara, this café stretched across three spacious floors, with large windows that gave onto to the avenue below. They also had some of the best ice cream around, and although men occupied the ground floor, youth could always go upstairs where they could meet up with friends over cake and coffee. As she drew the café on the map, Sara promised to take me there next time we met.[89]

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[88] This phrase was a common way among young Moroccans to refer to the male dominated café scene in certain working-class neighbourhoods.

[89] In the next chapter I discuss in greater detail the role of café spaces and café culture in the social life of young and old in Hay Mohammadi.

Sara M.'s map

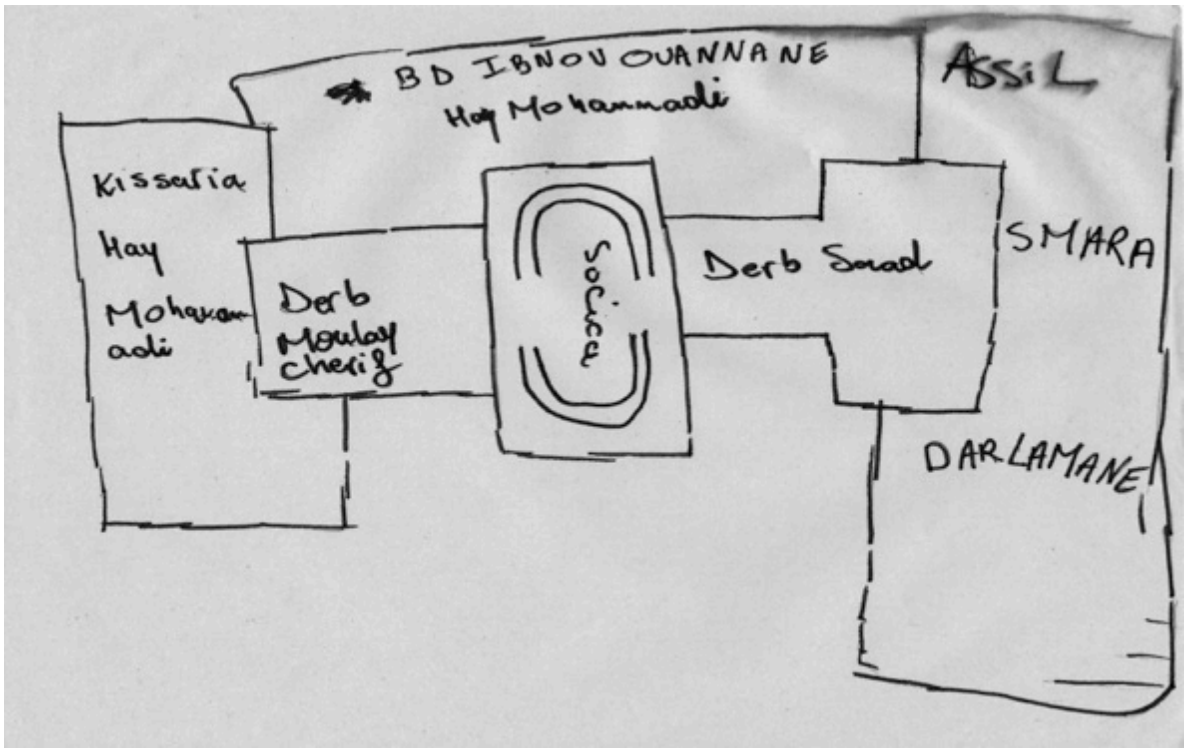

Figure 10. Sara M.'s map.

Hovering over the paper with the pen I had given her, another young woman in her mid-twenties, also named Sara, could not decide how to start. In Stefania Pandolfo's monograph about space in a Moroccan desert village, one of her interlocutors talks about drawing a map of the village: "It is easy. First you draw the walls." (1996: 16). The difficulty most people had in drawing a map of Hay Mohammadi seemed to be the lack of a clear boundary to the neighbourhood. As a consequence, the individual ideas about where the neighbourhood began and ended were illustrative of how the area had grown and changed over the past few decades. At the same time, it also suggested that most people identified most strongly with their particular quarter, while maintaining their proud membership as a Hay resident.

Eventually, Sara M. decided to draw her quarter, the SOCICA worker's estate which was one of two estates surrounded by walls in the neighbourhood. Sara M. had grown up in SOCICA, the fifth and youngest child of a factory worker father and a stay at home mother who supplemented the family income by taking on sewing jobs. Their home had recently been ceded to them after almost four decades of renting, as part of an official decision from the consortium of factories that had built the complex in 1947. According to Sara M. this had given her father some peace of mind in his old age, especially now, she

jokingly told me, that her older siblings had all married and moved out. The fact that the estate is nestled within a perimeter lined by walls seemed to facilitate her drawing. After placing her quarter at the centre of the map, she drew two arches to distinguish it from the others.[90] Two quarters born out of Écochard's grid – Derb Moulay Cheriff and Derb Saad – flank Sara's home on the map, and they are in their turn flanked by other neighbourhoods whose name Sara M. placed in a way that mirrors their actual geographical positioning relative to one another (Fig. 10). In Assil they had the best orange juice around, she explained enthusiastically, and spilled her water glass onto the paper as she spoke. I jokingly told her it was all right, and the watermark could now refer to the area's juice fame. She then wrote the name 'Hay Mohammadi' twice towards the edges of the area encasing those quarters, and added the Kissaria (clothes market), because she said: "It's one my favourite places *fi al hay* (in the neighbourhood)." I asked her why the Hay was at the margins of her map, and Sara M. told me that although opinions varied, the real Hay (*al Hay bi debt*) was not the part where she lived. "Of course, if I meet someone *fi-l medina* (in downtown Casablanca) I'll tell them I'm from Hay Mohammadi, but in the Hay everyone knows SOCICA. The real Hay is *fi-l fuq* (on top)." A lot of people referred in this way to the core of Hay Mohammadi, as it sat on a slightly elevated mound from where you could almost spot a thin slice of ocean stretching behind the buildings of the SOCICA quarter and the industrial infrastructure beyond it.

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[90] Sara M.'s quarter, the same as Hakim's who is mentioned earlier in the text, was one of the first worker housing estates built by a conglomerate of industries between 1933-1945.

Asma's map

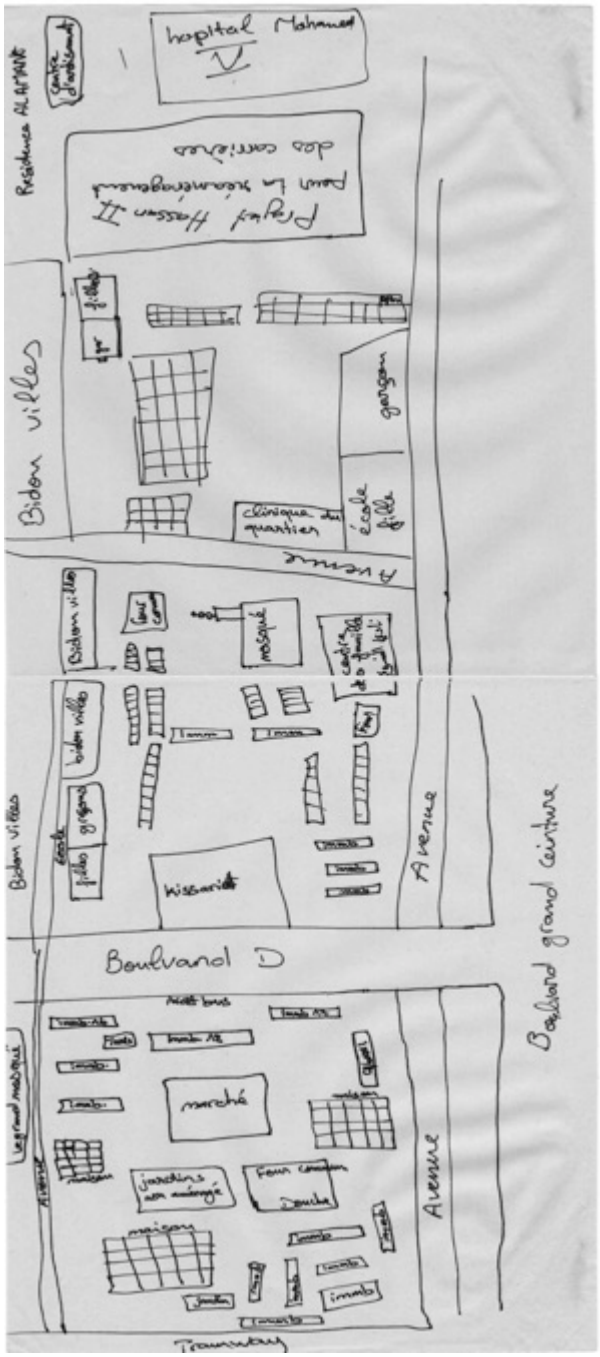

Figure 11. The 'real' Hay Mohammadi, two-page spread by Asma.

One of my closest interlocutors in the neighbourhood, Asma (see Introduction) also maintained that the core area around the Kissaria contained the 'true' Hay Mohammadi, although she was willing to concede that administratively speaking the neighbourhood encompassed other quarters not contained on her map (Fig. 11). I sat down with Asma one afternoon in her mother's small apartment, only feet away from the Kissaria. We had just had lunch and the rest of the usually boisterous family was taking a short nap before

returning to work. In the brief moment of afternoon quiet, she told me to bring out my drawing pad. Asma was recently married and lived with her husband in neighbouring Ain Sebaa, also an old industrial quarter of Casablanca, but less densely populated. "*Walakin ana dima bint al hay* (but I am still a girl of the neighbourhood)," she mischievously told me, as she recounted how she would run up and down the neighbourhood in her childhood, playing football with the boys and climbing all over the place. Asma began to draw her map from the Kissaria. She then mapped out the wide road that separated their apartment building from the market, and, occasionally stopping to consider the placement of a building, she swiftly drew with minute detail the entire surrounding area. Small rectangles populated her map, and she diligently labelled all of them *immeuble* (apartment building).

I pointed out how she had differentiated a larger public garden near the food market (*marché*) from a smaller one (*jardin*) by labelling it '*jardins non aménagés*'. With an amused smile she said: "It's true though, you've seen it when we went to the *marché,* isn't it dirty? Because all the vegetable sellers throw their waste in there and the *commune* (local administration) doesn't do anything about it." After a brief pause for thought, she added to the map the school where she went as a child. Certain spots on Asma's map are represented as they were when she was a child, such as the gender-segregated school, *école fille* (sic) *garçons*, while most of them are drawn in their 2014 state, thus creating small time warps, layering the past with the present in a rich and complicated palimpsest. The two communal ovens (*four*) she drew were still functional she told me, but her family made their bread at home now because her mother no longer seemed to trust the *four*'s cleanliness. Baking their daily bread at home was also more economical, Asma conceded, since they could save on the fee paid to the baker, and use flour that her mother's family sent from the countryside, where she still owned a small plot of cultivated land. But having a communal oven around was good, Asma claimed, leaving them that option if need be.

Her map also included other public facilities such as a family centre, the bus stop she used in her university days, the neighbourhood clinic, the large Mohammad V hospital behind the Hassan II projects, and a mosque. Asma mentioned that they seldom used these *equipments* (public facilities) anymore, since, thanks to her older siblings' financial help, family members who became ill could be taken to private doctors and clinics instead of spending long waits at these underfunded and crowded facilities. The 'grand Friday

mosque' had been squeezed toward the edge of the paper, prompting me to ask if that meant they frequented the smaller one more often. Asma confirmed, saying her brothers liked the smaller mosque better, mainly for its proximity. Also towards the edges of her map, Asma positioned the *bidonvilles*, suggesting both their place within her daily routines as well as her lack of social contact with their inhabitants.

Adil's Map

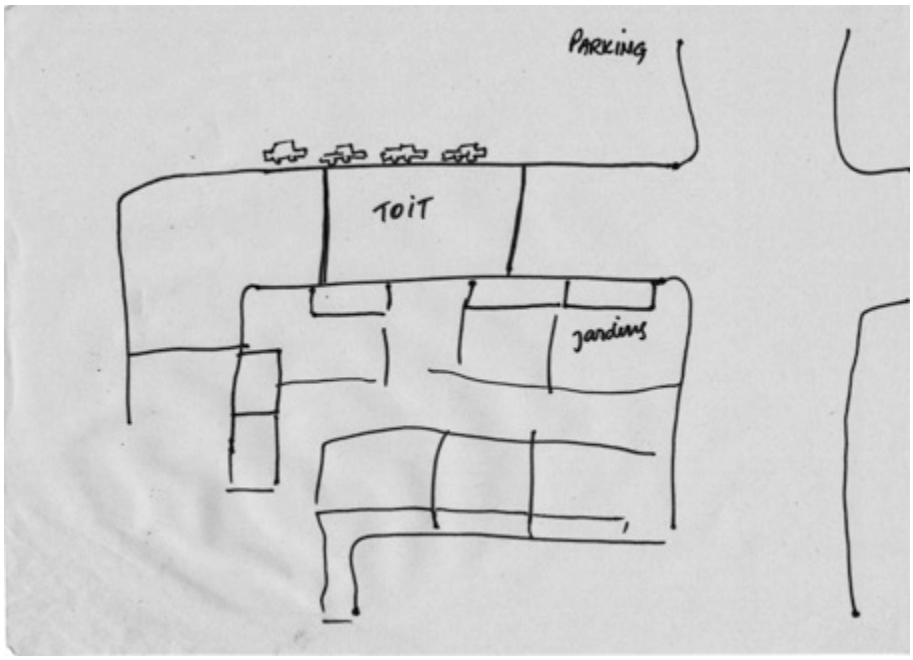

Figure 12. Dar Lamane by Adil.

Adil's sketch seemed to be the opposite of Asma's (Fig. 12). An English teacher in the neighbourhood and a freelance translator, Adil was in his early thirties and lived in the Dar Lamane housing complex that was built in 1983 as part of an earlier attempt at *bidonville* relocation. The complex was awarded the Aga Khan Award for Architecture in 1986 for the way in which it provided an elegant, low-income solution for housing – j"with cohesion and character" – 25 000 inhabitants across 4000 units, including a mosque, a covered market and a festivities hall (Lawton and Loughran 1987: 29). Over the years the complex had visibly deteriorated in parts, experiencing different degrees of the types of spatial appropriations seen in the case of the Nid d'Abeille and Semiramis buildings. Asma had told me on one occasion that one of her elder sisters had wanted to move into an apartment in Dar Lamane because they were reputed for beings spacious and well built. But she had decided against it because of the proximity of the remaining

karyane and the increasing degradation of the area in recent years. Adil seemed to share many of these impressions.

Adil and I were introduced by a common friend and met one afternoon, after he finished his language classes at the community centre where he taught. Sitting in the empty staff room, Adil insisted we converse in English, because he felt more comfortable in that language he said. We spoke about what it was that he liked about the neighbourhood and his experience of having grown up there. Speaking of the area around his quarter he said: "Bad people were known before, but now the majority of people in Dar Lamane are bad. And this is mostly because of the influence from the shanty-towners (sic)." He told me in no unclear terms that he did not like the neighbourhood because "it is absolute chaos. The future is contaminated because the shanty dwellers left their legacy here". For this reason he was hoping to move out, "soon, *inchallah*", he said, mixing English and darija. He added that he had recently gotten engaged, and was trying to buy a new apartment on the outskirts of Casablanca in time for his wedding the following year. As he drew his map, he stressed those aspects of his quarter that bothered him most. The way that people had appropriated communal space and turned it into private gardens (*jardins*), and the fact that others parked their cars and left little room for pedestrians and inhabitants who were trying to reach their homes. I tried to press him about other things he was familiar with in the neighbourhood growing up, but he shook his head and went on to describe how even as a grown man he still feared the violent bullies who hung out on every street corner on his way home from work, and warned me to never try to use an ATM machine in the area, be it day or night. Through its ostensively laconic appearance, Adil's map indicates the heterogeneous experience of attachment or detachment from neighbourhood space. Lacking the profuse detail of Sara N.'s and Asma's respective maps, the only details on Adil's otherwise abstract sketch point towards spaces of contention and manifestly demonstrate the maker's will to disinvest himself from the place he lived in.

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Fatna El Bouih's Map

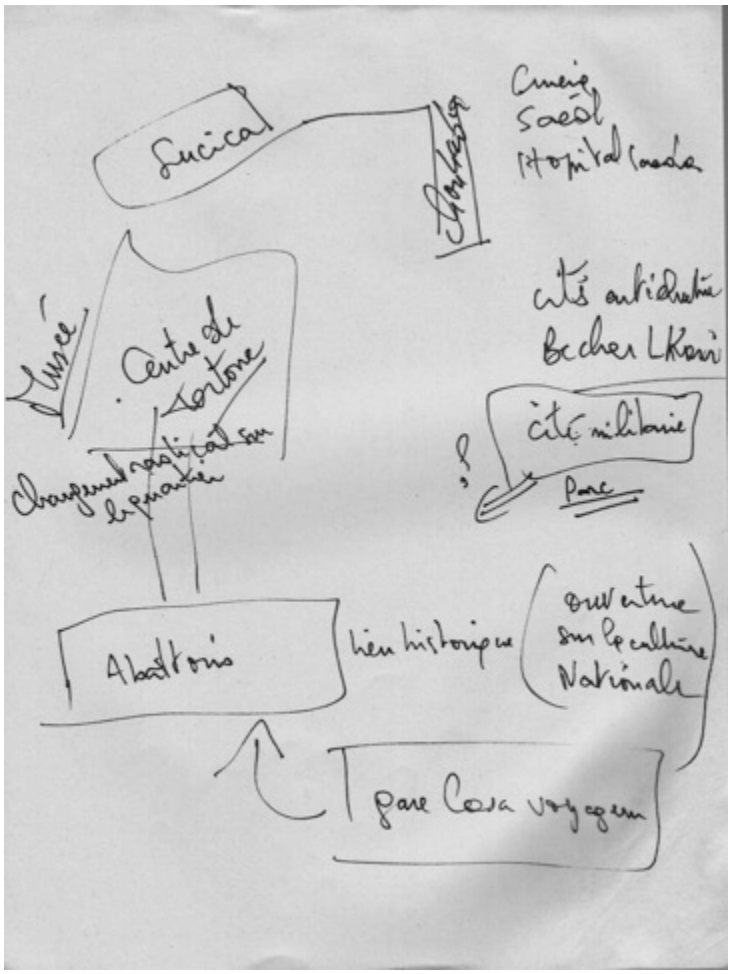

Figure 13. Fatna El Bouih's future-looking map.

During one of our longer conversations about the neighbourhood and its landmarks, Fatna El Bouih also agreed to draw me a map of the area, latching on to my proposition that the map could be a fictional one, a vision for the neighbourhood in the future (Fig. 13). "Oh, I really like that idea!" she said and her hand landed on the page in wide strokes, conjuring up a version of Hay Mohammadi in which the Derb Moulay Cheriff detention centre, the landmark intimately and traumatically tying her to the neighbourhood, would become a '*Musée*'. Her commentary scribbled under the '*Centre de Torture*' as future museum reads: 'A radical change of the neighbourhood' (*Changement radical sur le quartier).*[91] A corridor or path links the future museum to the Abattoirs, a 'historical place' (*lieu historique*), which could afford the neighbourhood an 'opening towards the national cultural scene' (*ouverture sur la culture nationale*) if converted into an alternative art

[91] All the translations are my own.

space. As she spoke her hand was still at work on the paper, and the SOCICA worker housing emerged above the torture centre extending an arm to the Echouhada (Martyrs) Avenue, in a gesture that linked together these spaces of past trauma. The Saada Cinema and the health clinic were also added for their significance as cultural and historical landmarks. And then, sighing, Fatna El Bouih, said: "And of course the military housing estate *Bechar Lkhair*, [next to the old garrison] how nice it would be to transform it into a park?" and she placed a question mark next to it. At the bottom of the page the city's oldest train station, *Casa Voyageurs* pointed the way to the future with an arrow. Sitting back, Fatna exhaled and said: "Now that would be a transformation worth seeing."

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The way the Situationists used maps was determined by their *performative* aspects, placing a particular set of events at the core of that performativity, and grounding it in a particular context (*milieu*). In this sense, my collaborators' maps are also records of accumulated daily performances and recurring (mundane) events, images of their everyday paths through the neighbourhood, but also their aspirations and ideas about the future and their place within its social-geography. In their rendition, neighbourhood places become represented not only as locations in space, but as lived histories that give birth to meaningful places, "nodes in a matrix of movement […] bound together by itineraries" (Ingold 2000: 219). Richly (see Asma and Sara N.'s maps) or sparsely contextualized (Adil's map), each cartographic representation nevertheless offers a particular angle onto the lived spaces of the neighbourhood and the diversity of positions held by those who inhabit its spaces.

To borrow from Yael Navaro-Yashin's work on contested space in Cyprus (2012), the subjective cartographies presented in this final section could be seen as snapshots of the wider "affective space" of Hay Mohammadi. By deftly resuming recent theory on the topic and drawing on the work of Deleuze and Guattari, Navaro-Yashin explains that "affect" in this case is not simply a psychoanalytical condition which is linked to individual subjectivity, but can be akin to the "emergence of 'an aura'" that may move "through human bodies" while not necessarily emerging from them, "making it possible to read many other things, such as space and the environment, as affective" (2012: 167-170). Similar to Sara N., Asma did not have any profound narrative or personal story linked to the places she so meticulously drew on her map. Rather, her choice of including them

seemed to be motivated by a hard-to-define 'feeling' born out of the complex entanglement of personal and local history, the attachment to a familiar place, and the pride of knowing its every nook and cranny. I therefore see the cartographic drawings of my collaborators as both suffused with this 'aura' as well as productive of it, as they fuse records of lived experience with the built fabric of the neighbourhood, ultimately creating unique records of the corporeal experience of Hay Mohammadi as a lived-in place.

It is also important to note that performative aspects suffuse both the maps by my collaborators as well as the cartographic representations produced in the context of heritage and commemoration regimes. The previous two chapters have also highlighted the performative nature of heritage and commemorative activities. Deborah Kapchan has defined performativity as being constituted by "patterns of behaviour, ways of speaking, manners of bodily comportment – whose repetitions situate actors in time and space, structuring individual and group identities" (1996: 479). While her definition can be seen to encompass the acts and activities of all the actors I have discussed thus far, it becomes evident that relevant distinctions can and do emerge as a product of these performative acts.

In distinguishing the performative process of my informants from that employed by heritage and commemoration regime, I find Deleuze and Guattari's work on spatiality (1987) to be particularly salient. Thus, the process employed by most of my friends in their mappings could also be likened to the process-form of the 'rhizome'. For Deleuze and Guattari the 'rhizome' can have multiple entrances or exits, "no beginning nor end, but always a middle (*milieu*) from which it grows and overspills" (1987: 21). This milieu is the lived experience of these inhabitants from which their cartographies spill forth, with more or less detail, echoing their affective ties to or alienation from their environment. These different ties are indicative of different outlooks as well as personal socio-economic histories and positions within the neighbourhood, standing testament to the heterogeneous and shifting social landscape of the area. Significantly, however, the anxieties and dislikes voiced through the drawing of the individual maps seem to signal a situation in which Hay Mohammadi is seen to have entered "a path of social decline" which finds expression in the moral undertones of my interlocutors (Cohen 2004: 14). This moral dimension of neighbourhood space manifests itself in Adil's concern with what he perceived as the growing delinquency in the streets surrounding his building, or Sara N.'s emphasis on the gendering of spaces of leisure – an aspect I take up again in the next chapter. At the same

time, the criticisms and complaints that bubble up from these maps are not only voiced at or against the internal 'other' symbolized by the reified image of the *karyane d*weller, but also towards the institutions and responsibilities of the Moroccan state. Fundamentally, these latter type of criticisms are not made from outside the framework of the State, but very much within it (cf. Cohen 2004). This is illustrated by the fact that arguments about local degradation were constantly framed as effects of state neglect, and demands for redress were articulated by inhabitants such as Asma and Adil as the need for more state intervention and the increased presence of local administrative actors that would enforce stricter urban regulations. The maps they drew couched these thoughts and concerns within the knowledge of everyday spaces and moving bodies.

The rhizome as alternative mapping process-form therefore stands in opposition to tracings, which, to return to Corner's definition, can be likened to traditional survey maps, and which he distinguishes from mappings. Deleuze and Guattari also see tracings as hierarchical systems of order, which are limited to creating repetitive redundancies. Instead, as records of personal histories of being and moving through neighbourhood space, the cartographies drawn by my collaborators reveal a variety of embodied forms of knowing. In this sense they resonate with Cristina Grasseni's work on "skilled landscapes" (2004), which are produced through historically situated modes of inhabiting the land, of interpreting and moving in the landscape (2012: 98). For Tim Ingold, this is foremost an ambulatory form of knowledge that resembles storytelling as it condenses and recounts numerous instances of "wayfaring", or moving along a path and acquiring knowledge through that movement, a process he distinguishes from navigation (2000: 235). Indeed, moving alongside Asma or Sara N. through the often cluttered neighbourhood streets and busy alleys of Hay Mohammadi recalled the "deft threading of a dexterous movement" that Ingold places at the heart of this way of ambulating (ibid.). Some, like Asma, were proud of possessing both the literal skill of this dexterous movement as well as the knowledge of place derived from it, while others, like Adil, saw the need to develop such a skill as a nuisance imposed by the chaotic, illicit character of a place he had grown to dislike. I see Asma and Adil's diverging attitudes as two of the many conflicting types of 'affect' associated with Hay Mohammadi's lived spaces. For Fatna El Bouih, whose experience of the neighbourhood was tainted by her traumatic detention at the Derb Moulay Cheriff commissariat, the mapping exercise allowed her to give tentative contours to a hopeful, reedmptive vision of the neighbourhood's future.

Looked at alongside the commemorative map, Fatna El Bouih's drawing seems to brave that crucial extra step needed for restoring dignity to the community. It does this by re-thinking its central *lieux de memoire* in a way that does justice to the past, organically assimilating it into the present as a way of making room for the future.

Conclusion

The power of maps seems to reside in their ability to capture our imagination. Whether their claim to authority is based in scientific accuracy, rational planning, historical truth or creative re-interpretation, maps can convey a great deal about their makers, users and interpreters. In the case of Hay Mohammadi, I have tried to show how ways of representing neighbourhood space are inscribed in a history of planning, control and policing of the urban margins. By exploring the genealogy of three different mapping acts, in this chapter I aimed to show how certain cartographic and visual narratives about the past reflected on the present. This chapter has documented how the uses and trajectories of the different objects that have been created out of these mapping efforts became commodities deployed within commemorative and elite heritage economies, but with limited use for the majority of Hay Mohammadi's inhabitants. Timothy Mitchell (2002: 93) maintains that this distinction between the representation and its object, wherein the representation becomes increasingly objectified and detached from its source, points to the ways in which dynamics engendered by colonial forms of knowledge production can be extremely powerful and continue to be reproduced through heritage discourses.

As such, it is evident that the subjective cartographies created by my friends and informants differ from Écochard's Cartesian grid, and from the attempts at producing an authoritative official account of collective memory through the commemorative map and the game-board. They provide a radically different understanding of neighbourhood space by focusing on those less heroic, mundane aspects of lived experience, returning the act of mapping to a place where storytelling and wayfinding have not been pushed 'off the map', discarded by the totalizing, scientific gaze of the modern state, as Tim Ingold reminds us (Ingold 2000).

The fetishization of the Écochard grid was the most visible manifestation of this privileging of the abstract over the real, of the primacy given to a depoliticized image of an idealized past over the messy, richly textured reality of the present. Inscribed in the same heritage-making regime as the grid, the commemorative map, although aiming to

capture some of the diverse social and memorial features of that same space, was only partially successful in conveying a more dynamic picture of the neighbourhood. By exploring the process of both the grid's fetishization and the making of the map, I became increasingly aware of a particular performative register inherent in commemorative and heritage activities. This performativity brought to light some of the mechanisms through which those leading the projects of Hay Mohammadi's spatial representation acquired particular forms of legitimacy. It also made apparent the closely-knit network of actors who were engaged in and mutually influenced by an increasingly shared language employed in this representational practice.

This language, as the making of the game-board revealed, together with the genealogies of representing a marginal, maligned place, evince the continuity and endurance of certain themes and myths shared by both the commemorative and the heritage regimes. As I have shown, despite the everyday frictions between the various actors who took part in both the making of the commemorative map and the game, the two objects were eagerly embraced and publicized within the framework of honouring the neighbourhood's past and identity. However, this selective preoccupation with particular aspects of the past inevitably created a certain hierarchy of what was "worth remembering" and whose memories and narratives were worth listening to, to the detriment of a more organic account of events (cf. Allan 2013). Furthermore, by corralling the trauma of life in Hay Mohammadi behind a temporal border marked 'the past', the residual effects of that trauma on both individuals such as the elder former detainees, as well as the current everyday degradation of life in the neighbourhood were not only occluded, but also significantly depoliticized.

As subsequent chapters will show, answering the question of what kind of effects this depoliticization produced is not a straightforward matter. On the one hand, most of my interlocutors believed that the political violence suffered by the neighbourhood in the past had contributed to the degradation of the present. On the other hand, they also blamed other kinds of inhabitants, and would sometimes refer to new wave of migrants who had spoiled the neighbourhood. The language of victimisation had limited uses, however. While the discourse of crime and poverty resonated with some (see Adil's map), many of my friends and interlocutors who agreed to draw me a map of *their* Hay Mohammadi revealed a variety of stories about the lives lived along the paths of the neighbourhood. Although proud of their complicated heritage and identity, most inhabitants like Asma and

Sara N. grounded their appreciation of the neighbourhood in the realities and concerns of the present, weaving their maps out of the threads of a richly sensorial perception of their environment, offering a glimpse into the 'affective spaces' of their neighbourhood. Within this framework, mundane spaces spoke to the politics of the present, prioritizing everyday life over the heroic dimension of the past. As such, these ordinary spaces and their affect offer an alternative to what in the previous chapter I spoke of as the depoliticization of neighbourhood space.

The following chapter will take this focus on the preoccupation with everyday life and the mundane spaces in which it unfolds, and move the discussion from representation into the realm of practice, placing at its centre the social and economic activities occupying the physical space of the neighbourhood's streets. Representations of marginality remain important to my discussion, as I will show that they continued to influence both the production as well as the perception of street spaces in Hay Mohammadi.

Chapter 3 | Streetscapes and the blurring of public/private distinctions

"*Mais c'est incroyable! T'as vu les Arabes, comment ils trainent dans la rue, mais partout quoi? C'est fou! Maintenant je comprends pourquoi ils font ça en France.*"

*"*It's unbelievable! Have you seen the Arabs, how they loiter in the street, everywhere really? It's crazy! Now it makes sense why they do it in France."

– Fieldnotes, September 2013: statement from a young French volunteer in Hay Mohammadi[92]

No map or photograph could possibly contain the experience of being in the streets of Hay Mohammadi. Travelling to Hay Mohammadi from downtown Casablanca in 2013-2014 entailed moving along a spectrum of gradually changing spatial scales and sensorial impressions. First, the tall and monumental office and residential architecture gave way to large, decaying industrial infrastructure, wide boulevards where the trace of dismantled freight tracks was still visible in places, and the smell of chemicals from a local plant mixed with a distant briny sea breeze hung heavy in the air. After passing this buffer zone where few pedestrians could be seen, smaller, four-storied buildings and wide avenues busy with people and commerce appeared and assembled into the vibrant street life of Hay Mohammadi. Walking towards what my informants in the previous chapter referred to as the core of the neighbourhood, the streets began pulsing with life, as work and leisure co-mingled with domestic activities that spilled into the street. Moving daily along the wide Ali Yaata avenue[93] in Hay Mohammadi, I passed a café that occupied the corner of a busy intersection. I averted my eyes from the lines of men sitting down in chairs always arranged to face the spectacle of the street. Continuing along the shaded sidewalk, I saw groups of small children improvising games in a rare, small patch of grass, while their mothers sat around on blankets or on woven plastic mats.

[92] Due to a partnership between the local *jam'iyya*, Initiative Urbaine, and a French public service organization, twice a year French volunteers would be placed with the *jam'iyya* for periods of up to six months. See Chapter 4 for a closer look at this dynamic.

[93] Named after the prominent Moroccan Communist leader born in 1920 in Tangiers, a significant figure of the pro-independence struggle.

Buffering the buildings on the north side of the main avenue from the heavy traffic, a kilometre-long band of freight train tracks had been cemented over and fenced in during the late 1980s. The neighbourhood boys improvised football pitches on this stretch and occasionally shared it with the same two men who deftly threaded silk yarn, using fence posts to secure one end, working the fine filaments across a distance of a dozen meters. An ad-hoc car wash operated in another section of the cemented tracks, the smell of window cleaner marking the space more effectively than a store sign. Further ahead I passed old men sitting on the edge of the fence, trying to warm their limbs in the afternoon sun, while across from them, shop owners waited for customers on broken plastic chairs. Small, white Honda vans lined the sidewalk, their passenger doors swung open while the drivers dozed inside, waiting for a delivery job. Women hung the laundry on makeshift lines stretched across the width of the tracks, while some used the length of the fence itself. The smell of fresh laundry blended with the smell of car exhaust, the noise of caged live chicken for sale, and the appetising aroma of street food. For weeks during the summer of 2013, an eviscerated mattress sat lying wounded next to the overflowing, insufficient trash bins, which I began to associate with the sound of a Berber music tape played by the vendor across the street. Where the cemented tracks paralleled the remaining debris of the Karyane Centra` *bidonville*, the cacophony of sensorial impressions reached a crescendo.[94] The scent of perfume from girls elegantly dressed to go out into town, the smell of grilled corn cob and fried meat, the shouts of children playing, the buzzing sound of scooters darting in and out of traffic, the horns of shared cabs calling for potential customers, the scent of freshly sanded timber or that of welding metal, and the call to prayer, would all blend into a multi-sensory cacophony of the street's sense-scape.

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These collected impressions were not those of an unobtrusive observer, but rather an intensely corporeal assemblage of direct experience, coloured by the interactions that my obvious outsider presence elicited from the people and the space. My gender as well as my age and occupation (or apparent lack thereof) became filters through which my experience of the street and people's perception of my presence in the street came to be seen. As a

[94] As I already mention in the Introduction, the *bidonville* (slum) was in the process of being dismantled, and the inhabitants relocated, a process I discuss in more detail in Chapter 6. During 2013-2014, however, a noticeable number of people from the *karyane* community continued to live or work at the site, despite the fact that the authorities had destroyed 80 per cent of the barracks.

consequence, during the fifteen months I spent in Casablanca and Hay Mohammadi I came to learn that being on or walking in the street was part of an intricate set of fluid, local practices linked to and indicative of particular perceptions of space, ideas about social class and moral propriety, economic strategies for survival, and the performance and reproduction of gendered identities. More importantly, the vibrant life of the street in Hay Mohammadi, together with the passionate and contesting views it elicited from inhabitants and city officials alike, begged the question: to whom does the street actually belong? And how can struggles over the use and occupation of street spaces inform an understanding of the larger forces affecting the production of livelihoods on the margins of Casablanca?

The previous chapter made evident that representations of Hay Mohammadi's space could only capture a fragment of its everyday lived vitality. In this chapter, I continue the investigation into how a particular way of 'being-in-place' was produced and contested in Casablanca, and begin by looking at the everyday experience of people in Hay Mohammadi through the prism of street spaces. As such, this chapter is concerned with the way in which street spaces were made, re-made and appropriated through social and economic practices influenced by historical and political forces, and inscribed by quotidian and seasonal rhythms that informed the identity of Hay Mohammadi as a *sha'abi*, working-class, and therefore undesirable place for outsiders and occasionally for locals as well (cf. Singerman 1995, Ghannam 2002, Ismail 2006). Grounding my analysis in the ethnographic data, in this chapter I argue that the improvisational practices visible on the streets of Hay Mohammadi are in fact indicative of the spatialization and routinization of contingency. As formal economic channels for securing livelihoods became harder to access for those with incomplete formal education and training in an era of liberalisation and shrinking labour markets (Cohen and Jaidi 2006), the inhabitants of Hay Mohammadi have been forced to devise tactics for coping with on-going economic insecurity. A careful consideration of street spaces and practices is therefore crucial for deconstructing the stereotypical portrayal of these spaces and constructing a more accurate picture of what the daily production of livelihoods entails for the urban lower class.

Inspired by Farha Ghannam's work on the presence of the lower-class body in Cairo's public spaces (2013), I explore the use of Victor Turner's concept of liminality (1967) – the state of being "betwixt and between" in a "realm of pure possibility" – for addressing the questions posed above. Although liminality has mostly been used in

anthropological analyses focused on sacred ritual and temporality, there is an implied spatial dimension in the very definition of the term. I therefore consider the space of the street in Hay Mohammadi and the practices it sustains as part of the same liminal register symptomatic of economic insecurity and the contingencies it produces. But whereas contingency can be thought of as a temporary period of social and economic crisis experienced by a particular group, the growing and pervasive sense of the 'permanentization' of precarity in recent years (Thomassen 2009: 22) can be likened to what Turner explored in his later work as the "institutionalisation of liminality" (1969: 107).

In what follows, I thus consider the inhabitants' responses to this institutionalisation, or routinization of precarity as part of a collectively deployed and accepted set of spatial practices,[95] which in their turn worked to reinforce a particular form of working-class, *sha'abi* habitus[96] manifested through particular expressions of bodily hexis that were also inflected by the performance of gender (Bourdieu 1977, 1990).

In order to portray the multiple ways in which this particular working-class habitus was spatialized and enacted in the streets of Hay Mohammadi, I have structured the material in this chapter around three different socio-spatial dimensions. The reader, however, should keep in mind that in everyday life these different dimensions not only existed simultaneously, but they also informed one another, composing the rich theatre of the street described earlier. I thus begin with an exploration of commercial street-spaces, and then continue with a discussion of the neighbourhood's public spaces of (male) sociality. In the final section I address the particular form of domestic encroachments I classify under the heading of 'limitrophe'.

Street economies or the 'suq-ification' of Hay Mohammadi

One day in August 2013, I was sitting squeezed between three other passengers in the back seat of a shared 'grand' taxi shuttling people from Ain Sebaa to Hay Mohammadi. As the driver slowly inched through both car and pedestrian traffic at a larger roundabout, he muttered his discontent with the hawkers selling their wares on the curb and thus

[95] Navez Bouchanine emphasizes this in her work on the appropriation of 'public spaces' in Morocco, by pointing out that even when such spatial practices do not serve the communal interest they are nevertheless regarded as legitimate by fellow inhabitants (1990: 148).

[96] I am of course referring to Bourdieu's elaboration of the concept of habitus as "not only a structuring structure, which organizes practices and the perceptions of practices, but also a structured structure: the principle of division into logical classes which organizes the perception of the social world as itself the product of internalisation of the division into social classes" (1984: 170).

forcing pedestrians into our lane. The young man next to me commented: "What can you expect? It [the neighbourhood] is turning into a suq. All of Morocco is turning into one great suq."

The suq holds a specific place in the Moroccan imagination. Associated with disorder, pollution, transgression and confusion, the suq is an old institution in Morocco whose image and metaphorical power remains salient for contemporary Moroccans (cf. Geertz 1979, Kapchan 1995, Navez-Bouchanine 2005). When a friend employed in a multi-national company in Casablanca tried to explain what it was like working in an open-plan office she exclaimed: "It's an open-suq, *machi* (not) open-office! I can't get any work done there." Another expression I often encountered was "*machi suqek*", literally meaning not your business, suggesting the close relationship between the suq and the exchange and circulation of information (cf. Geertz 1979, Kapchan 1996). Evidently, the suq, or bazaar, as it is known in its more Orientalist terminology, is a polysemous term, conjuring up at the same time a physical space and attendant locality, a particular form of social environment as well as a conceptual space. According to Françoise Navez-Bouchanine (2005: 118), tireless and committed sociologist of Moroccan urban spaces, the suq needs to be considered as the foremost public space in Moroccan towns in particular, and the Maghreb region more generally:

> "It would be an aberration to underestimate the long tradition and historical importance of spaces of commerce within a representation of what cities and public spaces signify for societies in the Maghreb. […] The 'public' heart of the medina has always been and continues to be until today the souq artery, the bazar, the Kissaria."

This raises a number of questions for what a suq-ification of Morocco might then imply. Based on Navez-Bouchanine's characterisation of the suq we might be inclined to see this growing suq-ification as a positive effect signalling the increased participation, albeit predominantly economic, of citizens in society. In this section I suggest that this should indeed be considered as one aspect of this phenomenon, but equally show reactions that are less easily classifiable.

To the unaccustomed eye, the depiction of Hay Mohammadi streets in the opening of this chapter might indeed call to mind the transgressive chaos of the suq. However, the 'suq-ification' of Hay Mohammadi street space was mainly spatially confined to an area around the old core of the neighbourhood. Radiating from the Kissaria, in a manner resembling Navez-Bouchanine's suq artery, the occupation of street space was commonly

associated with the *karyane*, since some of the *bidonville*-dwellers had depended (and some still did) for subsistence on this type of localized petty trade, the sale of food and various home and clothing goods. The wide road linking the Kissaria to the Echouhada (Martyr's) Avenue, where the new tramway passed, was one of the most visible occupations of street space by hawkers. The banyan trees that offered their thick shade during the day helped prop and anchor the street vendors' stalls at night. Numbered rectangles painted onto the sidewalk by the street vendors constituted one of the ways in which the occupation of the space had been systematized. The end of the sidewalk nearest Echouhada Avenue had been rebuilt after the tramway construction ended in 2012 and the shiny, new surface was actively being appropriated in 2013. One evening I was able to see a man driving a thick iron nail into the pavement, ready to add his own appropriation to the parade of merchants. The rhythm of this consumption of space and the duration for which it was transformed into spaces of consumption also abided by a particular schedule known to the inhabitants. Temporally this commodification of street space manifested itself along two axes: a quotidian occupation and a once or twice-weekly unmaking or 'voiding' of that occupation. The first type could be witnessed everyday as the street vendors slowly mounted their stalls when the afternoon turned into evening, their kerosene lamps giving the whole area a festive air. However, on Fridays, Sundays, and most mornings the same wide road would seem deserted and outsized, freed of its vendors. Traces of this illicit activity were visible only in the mysterious numbers painted on the pavement, the accumulation of frayed coloured threads on tree branches, or the sedimented organic waste from vegetable sellers that caked the pavement in certain parts, cushioning the pedestrians' step.

To some of my interlocutors in Casablanca this image was a clear sign of the neighbourhood's backwardness and a most vivid embodiment of the 'ruralization' of urban space, in the words of one city administrator. Unsurprisingly, this encroachment was unwelcome not only in the eyes of the state, but also for local inhabitants and members of the Casablancan rising middle-class, who saw the increasing pervasiveness of street vendors as an "epidemic" that must be contained lest it would become "contagious". Numerous times it would be pointed out to me by better-off interlocutors such as Meryem (the graphic designer introduced in the preceding chapters) how the old colonial quarter of downtown Casablanca, stretching from the walls of the old medina to the *Casa Voyageurs* train station along Boulevard Mohammad V, was now derelict because of the

encroachment of *sha'abi* people from the periphery. "Because of that", commented a young architect I had met at Casamemoire, "no one goes to stroll there anymore. Everyone goes to Maarif or Ain Diab now, since that is where the business also retreated to."

To my interlocutors from Hay Mohammadi the growing presence of street vendors was also an indication of the increasing precariousness of local inhabitants. One day, as I was pointing out the pervasiveness of men selling cigarettes by the piece on street corners in Hay Mohammadi, Marwane, one of my frequent interlocutors, commented that in his view this was a sign of growing poverty (Fr. *C'est un signe que la misère grandit.*). Marwane was in his mid-twenties at the time of my research, a student of biology at the university in Casablanca and a friend and colleague of Sara N. (Chapter 2). The second oldest of five siblings ranging in age from thirteen to thirty-five, Marwane and his family lived in a two-room apartment in a slightly dilapidated three story block in the vicinity of Hay Mohammadi's disaffected north-western factory district. His father's death only two years previous had left the family grieving and without the financial support of the family's only income earner. Marwane and his older brother had both taken on temporary jobs in the service industry, the longest of which had been at a local call center. The family had invested significant resources in the education of all five children and Marwane prided himself on their fluent and sophisticated use of French in everyday life as well as his involvement with cultural and youth activities at the French Cultural Institute in downtown Casablanca, where he was friendly with most of the librarians. However, the loss of his father made Marwane anxious about letting his family slip down a spiral of socio-economic decline, especially, he claimed, now that his mother who had been a stay-at-home-wife was forced to take on jobs as a cleaning lady. If before he would go out with his friends in the evenings and spend his money on the cafes around Maarif (see Chapter 1), Marwane confessed that he now gave his entire salary to his mother who would know how to budget it wisely.

Although in many small towns and rural areas the itinerant, semi-permanent form of the weekly suq persists, in the past decade in large urban centres like Casablanca and Rabat growing numbers of middle-class of consumers has meant increased preference for malls, international supermarket chains and local grocery vendors, relegating the suq to an inferior status, a place where the less affluent go to shop for second-hand, counterfeit and sometimes even stolen clothing, mass-produced household items and cheap produce. As Fadma Ait Mouss shows in her detailed portrait of the consumption practices of a lower-

class Casablanca housewife (2011: 47-65), many families living in the city's *sha'abi* quarters depend on these suqs for their everyday necessities. Following her informant, Saadia, on her weekly trip to the suq Larba (or Wednesday suq) in Sidi Othmane, on the south-eastern edge of the city, and other similar suqs outside Casablanca's city limits, Ait Mouss documents the many small ways in which Saadia relied on these spaces for feeding and clothing her family in an economic way (ibid). In places like the suq Larba, prices for produce, clothing and household items tend to be half of those in more central areas. Negotiating the price is not frowned upon, and vegetables can be bought cheaper around closing time (ibid: 57-58). At the same time, with certain exceptions also noted by Ait Mouss in her text – such as discounted upholstery –, the quality of the products sold in these spaces also tends to be inferior. Nevertheless, even when customers have to take relatively long journeys to reach the suq and manage to save only a single dirham, it can still be worth the effort. In Saadia's case, the savings went towards paying for her children's medication (Ait Mouss 2011: 52). In the case of my main interlocutors in Hay Mohammadi, money saved at the suq would similarly cover unexpected medical expenses or would be used for much needed home-improvements.

Amina's budgeting tactics resembled those described by Ait Mouss. On a regular basis Amina did most of her everyday food shopping at the street market close to her *derb*. Because her work schedule kept her busy until late afternoon, Amina often did her shopping at a time when most sellers would be packing up to go home. "Because of my job, I always end up buying the leftovers", she complained to me one evening as we were sorting through the scarce offerings of a vegetable cart. At the same time, Amina told me there was an upside to this, since this was also the time of day when the sellers would be willing to lower their price, which allowed her to save on daily necessities such as vegetables or eggs. Another advantage of having the street vendors in such close vicinity meant that Amina did not have to spend time or money on transport in order to do her shopping, as Ait Mouss's informant did. Moreover, compared to a super-market, Amina pointed out that the street vendors sold piece-meal even when it came to meat or poultry. For two dirhams, the vendor would cut two slivers from a chicken breast that Amina could use to flavour some rice with. The fact that most of the sellers she frequented knew her since she had been a young girl also meant that occasionally she could buy on credit and pay her bill at the beginning of the next month when she would receive her salary.

Another one of my frequent interlocutors from the neighbourhood, Fatima, also preferred shopping from the street vendors of Hay Mohammadi. I had met Fatima through the introduction of a local taxi owner Nabil (see Introduction), and she often invited me over to spend afternoons with her. A housewife in her early fifties, Fatima lived with her husband and teenage daughter in one of the Team 10 buildings, in a part of the neighbourhood people referred to as *Bloc al-Koudya* because of its slightly elevated position. Only a few streets away from the core of Hay Mohammadi with its Kissaria and vegetable sellers, Fatima's stated reasons for buying from the street market were somewhat different.

> "I buy here because it is healthier (*shahih*). The chicken is *beldi* (from the countryside) and doesn't have all the chemicals and hormones they put in the supermarket chicken (*djaj dyal supermarché*). There is also fresh bread at all times of day, so when it gets too hot to bake (bread) at home in summer I come here."

At the same time, Fatima insisted, one had to stay vigilant when in the street suq because pickpockets abounded. Showing me how she stashed her wallet on the inside of her apron, under her *dejallaba*, Fatima cautioned me about the many dangers of the area.

It comes as no surprise then, that contrasted with the western model of the boutique and the mall, street markets like that of Hay Mohammadi became the local embodiment of such common tropes as the 'failed economy' of developing-world countries, and thus regarded as a stain on the city's reputation.[97] However, despite the overwhelming representation of the Global South both in local imaginaries as well as in recent literature about street vending, it must be noted that there is a long history of struggles over the policing and regulation of sidewalk-based commerce in North America as well as Europe (Austin 1994, Sassen 1994, Stoller 2001, Zlolniski 2006, Lincoln 2008).[98] Regardless, street vending or what others have called street economies has become synonymous with the informal or so-called "shadow economy" of developing world states. In Morocco, this intensification of street vending is a relatively recent urban

[97] Hay Mohammadi street trade blushed in comparison to the scale and intensity of other well-known trade hubs such as Derb Ghallef, a historical and semi-permanent suq in downtown Casablanca mostly associated in the public imagination with counterfeit and second-hand electronics, or Qri'a, a souq in the Derb Soltane area of Casablanca famous for its scale, diversity of choice and density.

[98] In fact, southern European countries are also registering an increase in street vendors, largely owed to a recent population of immigrants who are denied access to the formal job market. See Reyneri (2003) and Calavita (2005).

phenomenon accelerated by the economic crises and rural droughts the country experienced in the twentieth century, which led many on a rural exodus towards urban areas in search of scarce work opportunities (cf. Escallier 1984, Cohen 2006).

Studies commissioned by international institutions such as the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF), and more recently the European Union, claim that "[t]he informal economy [in Morocco] is large and pervasive – and, often, ignored."[99] These studies also estimate that 30 per cent of Morocco's workforce is employed in the so-called informal economy, although it should be noted that street-vending only accounts for a small fraction of that percentage. Furthermore, as the work of Clifford Geertz (1979), Deborah Kapchan (1995) and David Crawford (2008) have shown, this type of commerce is not only rooted in a historical tradition dating back to the caravan trade route, but is also more formalized than such studies acknowledge. Keith Hart's work in Ghana has not only pioneered the term "informal economy", but has showed that western categories of economic analysis also occlude the important local specificities when it comes to the discussion of "autonomous" income generating activities in African urban areas (1973: 61). It is evident that informality has become a Janus-faced catch-all phrase for economic activities that elude the state's regulatory power. Indeed, the traditional argument against trade informality is of an economic nature, stating that this is pernicious both for the state as well as those working in the informal sector, since the latter do not benefit from social protection, while the former cannot collect taxes from a sector whose estimated annual profit, according to the World Bank, is a third of the country's GDP.[100]

Studies like the one done by the World Bank feed a popular hyperbolic perception of this sector, which is aided by its relative visibility and pervasive ideas associating it with 'chaos' and 'disorder'. But as Olivier de Sardan (2014), following the work of Evans-Pritchard, argues about sub-Saharan African economies, such practices are in fact the expression of accumulated colonial and post-colonial state micro-processes, which abide by "local cultural logics" (Olivier de Sardan 2014: 223) and should therefore be seen as manifestations of "ordered informality" (Evans-Pritchard 1940: 296).[101] And

[99] For full article see http://imfdirect229.rssing.com/browser.php?indx=17138316&item=2.
[100] See World Bank study *Fostering Higher Growth and Employment in the Kingdom of Morocco* (2006: 69-70).
[101] The anthropology of the state has contributed significantly to the de-normativisation of these perceptions through close ethnographic studies of how states 'work on the ground'. While it is beyond the scope of this dissertation to engage with the 'culture of bureaucratic apparatuses', anecdotal evidence gathered during my engagement with civil servants in Hay Mohammadi and Casablanca supports claims in the literature about

indeed, to those living in Hay Mohammadi the spatial as well as temporal order of the street could be easily distinguished from the apparent chaos. The rhythm and logic of the activities that took place in the streets of Hay Mohammadi were determined by communally accepted if not always embraced agreements. It was therefore evident to the inhabitants and my informants that the merchants would begin to occupy the sidewalks adjacent to the Kissaria at dusk, but that on Sundays those same streets would remain largely deserted, as everyone, including the hawkers, spent most of the day indoors resting after a long week of work. Awareness of the street market's rhythm did not unanimously translate into support for it. Neighbourhood inhabitants I spoke with at various times during my fieldwork reacted in ambivalent ways to the growing occupation of street space by informal vendors, and responses varied according to the proximity of their residence to the areas that had been undergoing this commercial occupation and their relative socio-economic status within the neighbourhood. Those like my close informant and friend Asma who grew up in the heart of Hay Mohammadi and the market area often had the strongest opinion on the commodification of her area's streetscape, which I detail in the ethnographic vignette that follows.

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On a weekday afternoon, like many we had spent together, Asma threw on a *djellaba*[102] and asked me to accompany her to the covered food market to buy various things for the afternoon *casse-croute* (snack). As we stepped out into the street outside her mother's apartment in the heart of Hay Mohammadi, Asma instinctively covered her nose with her hand, saying the assault of smells always hit one hardest in the afternoon. The area in front of the apartment building was crammed with parked cars, ambulant vegetable and fruit sellers, and women selling fried dough from improvised stoves. A continuous stream of pedestrians had to weave their way expertly through the bustling activity that spilled into the road, where vendors had laid out their wares on tarpaulins directly on the pavement. Amidst the hawkers' calls to entice customers with their wares, the smoke from the food stalls wafted upwards, covering the area in a hazy canopy of smells. Taking in the scene, I

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the heterogeneity and non-monolithical nature of state bureaucracies. For comparative examples see Bierschenk and Olivier de Sardan (2014).

[102] A *djellaba* is a long, loose-fitting unisex robe, made out of wool, with long wide sleeves and a baggy hood (*qub*), traditionally worn by the Berber population. In recent decades it has become a popular garment among urban women, who often own dozen of *dejallabas* in various colours and fabrics.

jokingly pointed out to Asma that it resembled Jemaa al Fna,[103] to which she retorted: "It is more like *Jemaa al bla*," a play on words which meant "the trash gathering". Despite her scorn, when we passed a hawker's pile of silky coloured headscarves, Asma paused, quickly inspected the wares, then asked for the price and purchased three scarves for what she told me was the "ridiculously low" price of 24 dirhams (£ 1.80). Later, as we sat in her mother's tiny apartment, I asked Asma if the area had always been as busy as it was now with street vendors. Asma claimed that when she was younger there were not as many ambulant sellers.

> "There was only the *marché* (covered food market), and the Kissaria back then. But they slowly started to come from the countryside (*al-'aroubiya*), first a few, then more. One night though, back when I was a [university] student, maybe four years ago, I remember we woke up and there was a really loud noise outside. It was the gendarmes; they came at 3 a.m. to throw them [the vendors] out and clean up; some of the vendors would sleep under their pushcarts during the night. But they began to fight back against the gendarmes. Some people tied themselves to their carts and threatened that they'd cut themselves or light themselves on fire. It was crazy! The noise woke everyone up. And in the end the gendarmes gave up because they were afraid of a riot, and the vendors are still here."

Given Hay Mohammadi's experience and history of efficacious state repression, it might seem odd that the gendarmes were not able to drive out the street vendors. In more central parts of the city, where sidewalk commerce was also encroaching on every available space, small teams of gendarmes would regularly patrol the streets and scare away the vendors, who would return once the gendarmes had finished their rounds, ostensibly demonstrating the combination of inability and unwillingness to efficaciously address the proliferation of street vending.[104] In her work on economic governance in the Chad basin, Janet Roitman speaks of this type of collusion between local authorities and those engaging in informal or explicitly illegal forms of trade as the shifting assemblages of regulatory authority that function across the conventional divides drawn between traders, police and local bureaucrats (2005: 186). Through a very provocative analysis of the

[103] Considered to be the prototypical example of a World heritage site in Morocco, the Jemaa al Fna is a famous open-air souq in Marrakech initially inscribed on the UNESCO 'Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity' in 2001. See UNESCO (2008).

[104] In the fall of 2014 an online article claimed that the street vendors operating in the vicinity of the Echouhada Avenue in Hay Mohammadi would finally be permanently removed. See http://www.lematin.ma/journal/2014/hay-mohammadi_le-boulevard-achouhada-debarrasse--des-marchands-ambulants/210364.html. In a phone conversation I had with Asma a few months later, she told me, however, that the street vendors were still there.

ecosystems forged around smuggling, Roitman proposes that such practices can be construed as "claims to wealth" that are considered acceptable at certain points in time by all stakeholders (2005: 6). Sociologist of Morocco Marie-Pierre Anglade's work on illegal street vendors in Casablanca seems to confirm this view (2011). According to Anglade, street vendors – also called *ferracha*, an appellation derived from the term *ferrach* meaning 'bed' or 'mattress' owing to the way in which they display their wares on a piece of tarp or cloth on the street – are often involved in complex networks of complicity with and against the local authorities, leveraging their power as a relatively numerous group to either buy the temporary favours of the *gendarmes* with small bribes or make peace with the owners of legitimate shops by promising to share a fraction of their earnings. In the case of Hay Mohammadi's informal street trade, certain moral undertones were also involved in the justification of the state's tolerance of these practices.

In a formal meeting with Mr. M., a senior employee of the Hay Mohammadi urban planning division, I asked if he could explain the mechanism through which the state regulated and enforced the distinction between fair uses of public space and less legitimate occupations of street space.[105] A mild mannered man in his forties, he had been generous with his time and answers as we sat in his office inside the forbidding prefecture building, a monument of the 'Emergency Urbanism' era (see Chapter 1). Initially bewildered by my question, and hinting that such a common sense thing need not be explained, he went on instead to tell me how 'the state'[106] reacted to the occupation of 'public space' by petty street vendors. Letting out a mournful sigh he said:

> "We know; we see what is going on. But what can we do? The state tolerates this. Of course there are laws regulating the use and occupation of public space. There are fines we can give out. But sometimes we have to turn a blind eye. We are not heartless; we know that some of these people have no other way to earn a living. Occasionally we give out permits to people with disabilities so they can engage in street commerce."

However, Mr. M. made a clear distinction between street vendors and café owners, and had no moral qualms about fining the latter. He told me that normally café owners were

[105] As one urban planner explained to me, due to inconsistencies in zoning regulations, in certain cases (i.e. newer villa neighbourhoods) sidewalks are part of the private property of adjacent buildings, while in others the same space 'belongs' to the public authorities.

[106] In common speech Moroccans often referred to state institutions and their practices using the umbrella term *al-Dawla*. In employing this term I am aware that the state is not a "unified source of intentions, politics and coherent plans" (Blundo 2014: 70). To the contrary, as Mr. M.'s statements demonstrate, in practice the daily workings of regulatory bodies where just as shifting and complex as the social worlds they tried to 'make legible' (ibid.).

allowed to use a certain, regulated portion of the sidewalk for their activities, but they would often end up appropriating the entire sidewalk, and in his view this was a much more serious violation of public space. I will come back to the role of cafés and their position within the neighbourhood's street space ecology, but for now it is important to observe the differentiation made between more and less legitimate forms of street commerce in the eyes of some state officials.

Despite a common view among my informants that state bureaucracy was indifferent to the plight and hardships of individuals, and that the state was a rational, unfeeling apparatus made up of more or less legitimate rules and regulations, Mr. M.'s statement demonstrates an aspect of the state's working which can be described as 'compassionate bureaucracy', or what has more broadly been described as a "soft-state" (Myrdal 1968, Bayat 2012). Bayat posits that a soft-state tolerates these forms of encroachment, because it is aware that it cannot provide the necessary social and material support to its most destitute citizens. At the same time, despite an often "authoritarian disposition and political omnipresence", a "soft-state" lacks the technological capacity to impose full and efficacious control (Bayat 2012: 124).

More cynical observers in the local media saw the state's reluctance to pursue street vendors in the years following the Arab uprisings of 2011 as a cautious reaction to the act of Tunisian street vendor Mohamed Bouazizi, whose death from an act of self-immolation set off the Tunisian revolution and the wider protest movements in the region (cf. Alsaden 2012). Some did not support this cautionary approach. A colleague of Mr. M. expressed his frustration with the fact that this had led to an increased pressure on local civil servants from ordinary inhabitants: "Any guy can show up now and threaten to set himself on fire if I don't give him a plot of land or a permit!"[107] Although he could not offer a concrete example of such an incident occurring in Casablanca or Hay Mohammadi, it was an indication that those working in the administration could also feel trapped by the procedural ambiguities with which they had to operate. However, as Mathew Hull points out in his ethnography of bureaucratic practices in Islamabad (2012), the state's ambivalence and reluctance to abide by its own laws can also serve to increase the state's control by allowing it to consolidate and enact new rules in response to shifting contexts.

[107] See Kerry Ryan Chance 's work on fire and its role in South African slum-dwellers practices of political resistance (2015). Also see Chapter 6 for the use of fire as a way of 'coaxing' the state into formalizing the rights of *bidonville* settlements.

As a matter of fact, Asma, like many others in the neighbourhood, saw the state's tolerance of street vendors as duplicitous.

While she occasionally expressed her annoyance at the scene outside her childhood apartment, Asma claimed that she did not particularly oppose the street vendors. She was aware that they were willing to sell at lower prices and provided goods for which she would otherwise need to venture further into town. Many of my other interlocutors held similarly ambivalent opinions about the street vendors. My other close friend and informant, Amina, told me that even if she were to move out of Hay Mohammadi, she would still come back to do her shopping. In fact, many people who had moved away to the newly built areas on the growing periphery of Casablanca continued to do their shopping in Hay Mohammadi. On one occasion, as I was having lunch with Asma and her in-laws in Ain Sebaa, they were joined by visiting family from one such new housing development, and a discussion about the price of produce in newer peripheral neighbourhoods ensued. The man, a maternal uncle of Asma's husband who was a retired civil servant, led the conversation as they listed and compared prices, ending with his firm conclusion that it was more advantageous to shop in Hay Mohammadi.

Moreover, Asma emphasized that the state's apparent tolerance towards the vendors was not as altruistic as Mr. M. had suggested, but also partly economically motivated. Specifically, Asma was convinced that the local administrators extracted fees from the vendors in the form of bribes, a common view among the inhabitants with whom I spoke. To illustrate her point, Asma contrasted the story of the rioting street vendors with a different incident, which occurred when someone attempted to build a kiosk next to the bus stop in front of Asma's childhood apartment building. "We all got together, all the neighbours, and we said we didn't want this kiosk here, because it would block the bus station, and there were already too many vendors occupying the sidewalk in front of our building." They all signed a petition and the young men in the building took it to the local administration to have it registered.

> "You know what happened next? The police gave the young men a good beating and sent them home. And the week after, the kiosk went up again while a policeman was standing guard. So we all knew then that bribes had been paid."

Likewise, in some people's opinion, allowing for growing informality in places like Hay Mohammadi and other marginalized urban areas served the Moroccan state in more perverse ways. On the one hand, as Mr. M's earlier statement suggested, in the absence of

a social security programme that would care for those with disabilities, the state's representatives felt compelled to silently endorse informal commercial activities as a way to assuage potential communal social demands. On the other hand, as some of my friends and informants observed, there were no street vendors tolerated in the upscale areas of town. In their opinion the state tolerated the increased 'informalization' of Hay Mohammadi and other marginal neighbourhoods because it confirmed an already existing dominant narrative about the inability of the inhabitants to abide by 'modern', urban codes of conduct. Asma and her family saw this strategy as a way of re-enforcing the existing distinctions between the neighbourhood and the better-off parts of the city.

Popular attitudes and responses to these spatialized social distinctions seemed to partly confirm this opinion. The informality, apparent spontaneity and improvisational skill that defined street vendors' practice were far from being lauded as a positive manifestation of local entrepreneurship or as "autonomous" income-generating activities (cf. Hart 1973: 61). Pejorative views that associated the presence of unregulated petty trade with increasing 'ruralization' of urban space often extended to other craftsmen in the neighbourhood. Before her wedding, Asma had ordered her living room furniture from a *ma'alem* (a master artisan) in Hay Mohammadi, as it was commonly thought that craftsmanship in the neighbourhood was of a high level. These opinions however seemed to be highly classed. Asma recounted for me what had occurred to the *ma'alem* only weeks before he had finished her commission. According to Asma, the *ma'alem* had had a fruitful collaboration with an interior designer working with a high-end clientele in the upper-class neighbourhoods of Casablanca. On a recent commission, he had sent some completed pieces directly to the client's address instead of going through the interior designer. When the homeowner found out that his furniture came from Hay Mohammadi, he not only sent it back, but also fired the interior designer. The *ma'alem* had told Asma he was disappointed, not because of the lost order, but because his craft had been degraded simply based on a prejudicial association with Hay Mohammadi.

This predicament also affected those who had held jobs traditionally associated with the neighbourhood's industrial history. As local factories began to close or relocate in the late 1990s, and the demand for working-class jobs underwent a dramatic drop (Cohen 2004), local men had turned to low-skilled, piece-meal work as a way of earning a living. On a wide pavement in front of a primary school near Derb Moulay Cheriff quarter I began to notice men sitting around in small groups, sometimes clustered under the shade

of a mulberry tree at noon, just waiting. Some would be engaged in conversation with one another, while others simply sat alone in silence, reclining on a small stool, or sitting on a piece of cardboard. In their vicinity, or near the edge of this unusually wide sidewalk, small mounds of objects signalled their respective profession. A plumber had set up an assemblage of pipes and faucets that stood tall, masthead-like on the sidewalk. Nearby a mason had put out a collection of tiles balanced on a pile of bricks, with a spade resting on the top. Some people had hung pieces of paper or cardboard displaying phone numbers. Passing them once more on my walk home at the end of the day, I noticed the men still sitting in clusters under the mulberry trees, playing cards or checkers directly on the pavement where someone had painted the sidewalk tiles in the pattern required by the game.

Intrigued by the apparent futility of their performance, as it appeared that no one ever came to commission their services, I asked one of my close informants who worked in the vicinity what the men were doing there. Hicham, a young man in his late twenties who had grown up in a neighbouring quarter, responded that they were indeed waiting for work. According to him the spot used to be a well-known hub for commissioning craftsmen in years past, but had grown "out of step with the times". The men's stoic waiting, day in and day out, with the exception of particularly bad weather, called to mind a staging of an absurd theatre play. The seemingly choreographed way in which their bodies inhabited the space and the ingenious ways in which they presented their craft/trade might have been interpreted as a silent form of protest, an insurgent occupation of space meant to reveal the futility of working-class skills in the political-economic context of Casablanca's margins.

The social life of the street

"The Arab street is damned if it does and damned if it doesn't."

– Asef Bayat (2003)

Although Bayat was referring specifically to the West's response to urban forms of protest in the Middle East, particularly street marches and sit-ins, his analysis of the status quo in which the 'Arab street' can never live up to the contradictory expectations of the West is accurately portrayed in the words of the French volunteer I cite in the epigraph to this chapter. As part of these contradictory judgments made about the 'Arab street', the life of the public space in the Middle East and North Africa is often subjected to an Orientalist

filter which interprets the seemingly passive presence of people in the street as a marker of disorder and social anomaly, whereas similar manifestations in European Mediterranean towns are praised as picturesque and culturally charming (Lawrence-Zuniga 1999, Low 2000). For the volunteer I spoke with, the 'Arab street' was foremost 'the Arabs' in the street,[108] an image that evoked the *banlieues* to which the immigrant Maghrebi population had been mostly confined to in France's post-colonial era.[109] More often than not, 'the Arabs' were the young men present on every street corner, seemingly loitering and wasting time, regarded as useless at best, and threatening at worst. This view was by no means exclusively held by foreigners in Morocco. Local upper-class interlocutors I met during my fieldwork would point out that in more "chic neighbourhoods" you would not find young men "aggressively" occupying public space in the way it occurred in *sha'abi* (working-class) areas like Hay Mohammadi.[110] In this way, the lens through which the street life of Hay Mohammadi came to be seen was heavily influenced by ideas relating to the performance and recognition of a particular habitus and its association with a spatialized working-class identity. In order to begin to understand how this dynamic played out, I will first turn to the practice of 'loitering'.

My discussion of these forms of loitering and the spaces they engendered is not concerned with their overt political potential in the way that Bayat considers the 'Arab street'.[111] This is because the presence of overt party politics was never a topic that the youths I was in contact with ever discussed in my presence. While I engage with this apparent absence of political resistance in the next chapter, here I focus on forms of 'hanging out' as encroachments in the same way that street vending operated. Bracketing for a moment income-generating forms of encroachment, I suggest that loitering and café

[108] Although I use the term Arab here to remain faithful to the volunteer's statement, Moroccans seldom appeal to this category as a first order of their cultural identity. Much has been written about the identity politics emanating from the association with a Pan-Arab cultural project, and it is not my intention to take up those debates here (see Dawisha 2003, Ghazal 2010). I am much more inclined to look at the use of such a term as a practice socially and historically inscribed by the emergence of a popular discourse in France, racialising and homogenizing an entire population of post-colonial immigrants from North Africa and the Middle East. For an in depth discussion of this popular phenomenon and its political implications see John Bowen (2010) and Didier Fassin (2013, 2014).

[109] A study of the architecturally famous housing estates in Hay Mohammadi had suggested the link with the banlieue. See Marion von Osten (2010).

[110] See Deniz Yonucu's work on Turkish lower-class youth and the politics of anger (2011)

[111] The politics of the 'Arab street' is something that has been thoroughly debated both before and in the years following the 2011 uprisings. Morocco only saw minor involvement from urban working-class quarters, an exception in the region that has been analysed by political scientists. See Bogaert's (2013) work on the unemployed graduates and their protest, as well as the February 20th movement. The majority of my interlocutors from Hay Mohammadi saw the February 20th movement as an illegitimate or unrepresentative movement because of the perceived liberal, or even libertine lifestyle of its predominantly upper-class members.

sociality were part of a constellation of everyday practices that were publicly deployed in the construction and reproduction of a particular working-class masculinity that came to be associated with marginalized neighbourhoods like Hay Mohammadi. At the same time these practices cannot be divorced from their particular economic and historical context, which as we shall see, more often than not limited the life opportunities of the neighbourhood's young men. This is not to say that women were not also present in the streets of Hay Mohammadi, but their presence seemed to belong to a different register of spatial practice, which I will discuss shortly. For the moment, though, I will focus on the particular forms of male sociality sustained by the street spaces of Hay Mohammadi, paying particular attention to various forms of 'waiting' and 'loitering', and delve into the ways in which women appropriated street spaces for non-commercial activities in the final part of this chapter.

As Susan Buck-Morss points out in her landmark piece on the politics of loitering, capitalist society has developed the tendency to respond to non-productive forms of being-in-the-street either by "stigmatizing it within an ideology of unemployment or taking it up into itself to make it profitable" through regulated and approved forms of leisure (1986: 112-113). In the case of Hay Mohammadi, non-productive forms of 'hanging out' in the street were stigmatized twice: once as the marker of unemployment and failed youth, and a second time criticized as an excessive form of lower-class leisure that took place in the much frequented and ubiquitous male-dominated coffeehouse. In Hay Mohammadi it was common to see teens clustered around street corners, outside barber shops, around improvised football pitches, or simply hanging out in front of their house door, investing the space on an everyday basis and producing a territorial form of gendered identity, complete with a repertoire of practice which very often included catcalls, aggressive displays of masculinity through body posture and dress, or simply directing a sexualized gaze at females passing through the space (cf. Ismail 2006, Ghannam 2013). This form of public masculinity is far from novel. In its striking similarity to the social phenomenon of the *hittiste* in 1980s and 1990s Algeria, it attests to similar issues affecting disenfranchised young lower class men in urban areas across the region. Combining the Arabic word for wall, *hit* with the French ending *–iste*, the term *hittiste* was meant to literally designate 'those who held up the walls', the scores of young men who were un- or under-employed during the 1980s and 1990s in Algeria (Queffélec 2002, Phillips and Evans 2007). Mass unemployment during this period brought with it an intense feeling of social and

psychological malaise for the young men inhabiting Alger's peripheral neighbourhoods. In their book *Algeria: Anger of the Dispossessed*, historians John Phillips and Martin Evans (2007: 109) describe the young men of the time thus:

> "Too old for school, yet too young for military service, too poor to think of marriage, with nowhere to meet apart from the mosque, young people were left feeling that it was impossible to become a fully grown adult. Abandoned by the regime, with no means of support, they felt trapped, in effect forced to live a kind of prolonged adolescence."

Feeling "hemmed in on all sides" by an oppressive state apparatus and the lack of socio-economic opportunity, the *hittistes* whiled their time away leaning against local neighbourhood walls, manifesting their disdain towards local wealthy elites, and engaging in various forms of local contraband (*trabendo*) to make ends meet during a period of intense scarcity (Phillips and Evans 2007: 109-111).

While this situation was very particular to the political and economic climate of Algeria at the time, similar forms of urban masculine sub-cultures exist across the globe, indicative of weak local economies and shrinking labour markets (cf. Cohen and Jaidi 2006). Indeed, illegal activities notwithstanding,[112] these forms of non-commercial occupation of street space have frequently been described in the academic literature as a way of enhancing one's economic productivity by 'keeping one's ear to the ground', so-to-speak, through sustaining social contacts and staying abreast of the neighbourhood news (Loukaitou-Sideris 2009). In recent years anthropologists have also begun to look at 'waiting' and 'whiling the time away' as mechanisms for elaborating future strategies and a form of practice that provides those who engage in it with opportunities for creating and supporting alternative forms of social capital, while at the same time allowing them to "shape and update their everyday routines in the face of contingency and unexpectedness" (Ibanez Tirado 2014). At the same time, I think it is important not to overemphasize the economic motivations for this encroachment into public space as solely economically motivated. When asked about these practices the young men I knew in Hay Mohammadi had different responses. Younger men and teens embarrassedly confessed that they sometimes engaged in catcalling as a way to show off and 'test the water' with certain

[112] As is often the case with impoverished, marginalized areas, Hay Mohammadi streets were also a space for the trade in illegal substances, the most common being hashish, and sometimes also sniffing glue. Although, my informants claimed that it was more common and safer to purchase these items at someone's house, it was not unusual for a dealer to 'hang out' on a street corner, exchanging drugs for money, while also running small errands for shopkeepers in the area, as I was able to witness myself on many occasions. These activities also contributed to the perceptions of male loitering as a criminal activity.

girls, but most of the time they were simply interested in getting out of the house and passing time with friends, or watching internet videos on someone's smartphone. Others, like Hamid – who was in his mid-twenties, came from a family of six, and shared a room with three younger siblings – insisted that he never spoke to girls on the street unless he knew them. When he did hang out in the evenings with young men from the neighbourhood, it would be to exchange news and talk about football, but never for more than an hour. In fact, many of my friends and informants in Hay Mohammadi would not describe their 'hanging out' or street corner sociality as a wasteful, passive activity. Most of the young men I knew preferred the term "sitting together" or "passing a good time" (*kandouzou al waqt*). As Najib, another informant in his early twenties from the neighbourhood told me, it was the only space where he could meet with his friends and just talk. Unemployed and also coming from a large family that had lost the father to a work accident, the highlight of Najib's day, he argued, were those few hours spent with friends. Forced by their cramped living conditions and limited by the availability of acceptable spaces for socializing, young men in Hay Mohammadi transformed the streets, alleys and shop corners of the neighbourhood into micro-plazas, reclaiming a space for socializing and communal forms of being-in-place (cf. Low 2000).[113]

Far from romanticizing this reality, I as well as my close friends and informants in the neighbourhood were aware of the fact that, among these groups of young men, there were those who had dropped out of school without the intention to return, and those who sustained particular social networks as a way of finding temporary opportunities for earning some easy cash in order to maintain their addiction to various substances. Although these cases reinforced prejudices about the neighbourhood and this particular gender and age category, I suggest that although they cannot account for the totality of such practices, they too need to be considered as symptoms of the trap in which these youth were caught. In this way, being-in-the-street could also be seen as the dissent of a particular collective (Bayat 2003), expressing the passive rejection of the disciplining constraints of urban space and the growing neoliberal view that defined both its use as well as the desirable life-projects and identity of its inhabitants. These practices were be no means coherent political acts, but, by creating a grey zone in which loitering and the cultivation of a particular type of social capital could be harnessed, their spatial practices could be considered as a formulation of new, ephemeral forms of contestation. Thus, by

[113] Navez-Bouchanine sees the emergence of these practices as a return to older forms of sociality, belonging to an era before the increased regulation and policing of shrinking public space (2005).

maintaining their visibility on the street, young men forcefully confronted the collective gaze with the lack of life opportunities open to them and reminded everyone of the structural failure of the state to include them in its vision.

But if for Asef Bayat the element that distinguished street politics from other forms of protest such as strikes or sit-ins is their visibility and "epidemic potential" to draw the attention of "actors with some institutional power like students, workers, women, state employees" (2010: 167), in the case of the loitering youth the response from those with institutional power was not one of empathetic camaraderie, but rather of unsympathetic blaming and vilifying.

Coffee-house sociality

The local *sha'abi* coffeehouse was often seen by outsiders, as well as some locals, as part of the same continuum of practices as the loitering of male youth. Mr. Bakkar, a locally respected figure in his forties and the president of a local *jam'iyya* (community organization), was one of the people I regularly spoke with who associated the loitering of youth in the neighbourhood with the ubiquitous presence of cafés. As we were speaking one afternoon in 2013, he passionately told me:

> *"*Between one café and another café you find a café. The youth (*les jeunes*) waste their time watching football and TV channels from the Gulf [states] that rot their brains. When they are not doing that, they loiter in the street (*fi zanqa*) doing nothing, throwing away their lives."

The practices devised by Mr. Bakkar and some of his fellow neighbours to deal with what they saw as a deteriorating situation will be discussed in depth in the next chapter. For now, I am concerned with how the local café was vilified, while at the same time acting as the place *par excellence* where a particular form of male sociality was enacted and displayed.

Neither public nor fully private, the commoditized social space of the coffeehouse has a long tradition and history in the Arab world. Predominantly associated with Egyptian popular culture, the coffeehouse is thought to have originated in 16th century Syria and spread throughout the Middle East and North Africa. As part of this history, men of all classes have gathered for centuries in the smoke tinged rooms of their local café to share news, greetings, political ideas, or to merely relax at the end of the day (Peterson 2011). As Rodney Collins (2011) writes in his recent study of coffeehouses in Tunis, in

recent decades there has been a noticeable and growing association between 'traditional cafés' and the social production of working-class masculinities in the Maghreb.[114]

Although they varied in size, for the most part the cafés in Hay Mohammadi were spacious enough to fit an average of 50 people, and always provided at least one LCD screen TV where the customers could watch live football. As Mr. M. stated earlier in the chapter, cafés often spilled into the street, purposefully or spontaneously occupying the sidewalks of the neighbourhood. The chairs and tables would typically be arranged to face the street, the setup resembling a theatre, focused on the spectacle of the street. Women often avoided using the sidewalk where café terraces had been set up, as a way of obfuscating the intense male gaze unabashedly directed at them from the cafés. As such, the cultivation of a particular form of masculinity in the space of the coffeehouse blended the sexualized observation of the opposite gender with a love of football. On days when derby matches were played, the cafés sonorously spread their aura into the public realm, attracting crowds of male bystanders, who would crane their necks to follow a particularly exciting game. My close female informants, Asma and Amina, had similar views and reactions vis-à-vis these male cafés. Amina often insisted on stepping off the sidewalk if we encountered a café terrace along our path. This allowed her to put a physical distance between herself and the gaze that would inevitable fix on our bodies when passing by. "It annoys me", she burst out when I once asked her why she preferred to step off the sidewalk. Asma once diagnosed for me the status of cafés in Moroccan society: "Cafés never go out of business. If it's closed, it means they are renovating, and they are renovating because they are expanding, which means they are making a large profit! No café in Morocco ever went out of business."

Despite the ambivalent reactions my friends and informants had to café culture, it was taken for granted that for the most part these were masculine spaces and that girls were not included in the criticism levelled at this social practice. Girls were more frequently trusted to act according to propriety standards set by the community. Significantly, though, as my friend Sara N. emphasized when drawing me a map of her quarter of Hay Mohammadi (see Chapter 2), while older, married women would visit one another and predominantly socialize inside the home, there were few if any public leisure

[114] Traditional cafés, of course, constitute but a segment of a growing market for leisure spaces. In recent decades there has been a considerable increase in the types and number of cafés and similar leisure spaces that cater to pious sensibilities, families, women and a mixed-gender clientele. As Mona Harb and Lara Deeb discuss in their recent book on such spaces in South Beirut, a growing, consumption-driven, cosmopolitan oriented lower-middle-class has meant the expansion of this type of leisure spaces (2013).

spaces for young women in Hay Mohammadi. Another female informant in her late teens from the Derb Moulay Cheriff quarter, Hajar, told me that she might go with her friends to a local *mahlaba* after school,[115] but it was not the kind of place where you could sit and observe people in the same way afforded by a café. Similar to what Lara Deeb and Mona Harb (2013) discuss in their recent study of leisure spaces in the pious area of South Beirut, newer cafés with more cosmopolitan aspirations and atmospheres were also emerging in areas around downtown Casablanca, as well as in more recent peripheral neighbourhoods such as Ain Sebaa. Hay Mohammadi on the other hand remained a predominantly *sha'abi* place, where mixed-gender cafés catering to youth in 2013-2014 were yet to be opened. It should also be noted that, oftentimes, youth preferred to distance themselves from the neighbourhood in order to engage in the type of social practices afforded by mixed-gender cafés.

On one occasion, when I was accompanying Asma and her brother, Samir, on an outing to a new, franchise type café in Ain Sebaa, I commented that it looked impersonal in the way that it tried to imitate the international style of a Starbucks coffeehouse. I added that the coffee at a *sha'abi* café was not only tastier but also cheaper. Samir was in his mid-twenties at the time, and had been trained as a chemical engineer. Having secured a position in a local company that also catered to international clients, he had recounted his swift climb through the internal ranks in a conversation we had early in my fieldwork. An ambitious young man, Samir often told me his goal was to learn as much as possible at his current job, before moving on to found his own company in the future. Already contributing to supporting his mother in her old age, his aspirations were anchored by clear milestones he had set for himself: owning a car, travelling abroad, being able to buy fashionable items such as watches or clothing, and eventually moving out of the parental apartment to start his own family. Owing to his job, but also out of personal preference, Samir did not spend much time in the public or commercial spaces of the neighbourhood, opting instead for cafes that he described as *classe* (from French, distinguished, classy). As a consequence, the traits that attracted him most to the aforementioned place were the ones signalling its belonging to a Western, European consumer modernity, whose image Samir was all too familiar with from photos sent by his relatives living abroad and

[115] A *mahlaba* is a small dairy bar typically serving a variety of milk-based fruit smoothies, pastries and sandwiches, its presence usually signaled by a bounty of fruit decorating its entrance. Initially associated with working-class areas, their ubiquitous presence and affordable price has made them a staple of the Moroccan urban fast-food sector.

television commercials he saw every day. He responded to my statement by saying that he did not mind paying for the experience of having a coffee in a cosmopolitan-looking place and teasingly told me that if I didn't like it I should just take my coffee at home. Samir added: "The people who go to the *sha'abi* cafés are not classy (*ma'andhumsh la classe* – literally have no class). They play cards or gamble and smoke." By stressing the importance of purchasing not only a product and its experience, but also a relatively exclusive space for the consumption of that experience, Samir's comment underscored the significance of the spatial dimension in the production and performance of aspirational class identities for neighbourhood youth and suggested the positive moral dimension attached to cosmopolitan-looking places (cf. Peterson 2011: 141).

Other young people I knew chose to frequent cafés outside the neighbourhood because of issues of surveillance and propriety, which again pointed to the moral dimension associated to certain local social spaces. Hajar, again, insisted that this was not because they were doing "bad things" when they went out, but because people inside the neighbourhood would gossip unnecessarily, whereas in downtown Casablanca they felt freer to stroll outside the watchful eye of their parents and neighbours.

Indeed, strolling was not something one did in Hay Mohammadi, as I learned early on during my fieldwork. As I briefly mentioned earlier, for a woman, moving through the streets of Hay Mohammadi took on a particular form. For the most part women's presence in the street was distinguished from that of men through its 'energetic intentionality'. What I mean by this is that when women stepped into the streets of Hay Mohammadi, they had a precise destination or activity in mind: they were either heading to work, on their way to shop for groceries, or were involved in household activities such as cleaning or putting out laundry. Even in moments of leisure, such as when they would sit outside in the evenings supervising the games of their children, women's presence in the street produced a type of being-in-place that differed from that of the male occupied spaces. This was most apparent in the way women carried their bodies through this space.

Paying attention to the mundane practice of walking can offer a particularly salient perspective onto how the street contributed to the production and performance of gendered identities. If men could loiter, sit, wait and walk about unconcerned, women literally marched down the street, eyes shielded by sunglasses or directing their gaze away from the potential sightline of a man. Before I became aware of the strain placed on women in the space of the street, I was often taken aback at the refusal or reluctance of my female

informants to walk for what I considered relatively short distances. Asma joked with me that she always stepped out of her house with the intention to walk, but then, independent of her will, her arm would go up in the gesture of hailing a taxi. Still laughing, she added that in the end it was safer to take a taxi, because it allowed her to avoid potential inconveniences such as pick pockets or salacious men.

From a woman's perspective, being-in-the-souq and being-in-the-street bore significant resemblance to one another, as well as some telling differences. As I mentioned earlier, women were a common presence in the streets of Casablanca, and Hay Mohammadi, but the embodied ways in which they occupied these spaces differed, depending on the type of space and situation. In the souq women were customers, assertively haggling, carrying their bodies confidently, joking with vendors, testing the products they were buying. Some friends went as far as to suggest that certain women were so confident of their mastery over souq space that they could become expert thieves in the Kissaria of Hay Mohammadi. Indeed, in 2013 there were a number of surveillance camera videos circulating on the Internet showing women wearing *djellabas* shoplifting objects as large as a handbag by concealing them under their flowing robes. On the street, however, women's bodies gained a different type of exposure, scrutinized by male eyes from inside shaded cafés, prompting women to carry themselves in a way that shielded their bodies from both gaze and words. While some women chose to partake in the social exchanges of the street, answering flirtatious propositions with either angry retorts or fleeting glances, or even stopping to chat, others preferred to make their presence less visible, or construct forms of (in)visibility which allowed them a greater freedom of movement. Safia, a young woman in her twenties from Hay Mohammadi, engaged in this latter form of tactics. Recounting for me the evolution of her personal practice of veiling herself in public, Safia told me that it was late in her teenage years that she began to wear a headscarf because of a personal desire to express her religious faith. When I spoke to her in 2013, she had been wearing the full veil (also known as the *niqab*) for a little over a year. "My father was angry with me at first and forbade me to wear it. He said he didn't want to walk down the street and not recognize his own daughter. But in the end he accepted my choice." Although piety played a significant part in Safia's choice of street dress, it also blended with other aspects that were not solely of a religious nature. In an exchange with another young woman from the neighbourhood, who had also recently taken on the *niqab*, Safia enthusiastically exclaimed: "One of the best parts though is that I

can walk everywhere now at most times of day, and no one will ever bother me." (cf. Newcomb 2008). While her choice of dress did not disguise Safia's gender in public spaces, it did help her carve out a safe space for her circulation within them (cf. Rosaldo 1997: 28-29).

In the next section I look at how blending pragmatic solutions to a lack of domestic space with the need to secure a safe outside space for themselves also led women to appropriate and literally domesticate the street as part of a variety of practices which contributed to the blurring of public/private distinctions.

Thresholds: blurring public/private distinctions

In her prolific work on Moroccan public space, the late Françoise Navez-Bouchanine (1990, 2002, 2003, 2005) investigated the use, appropriation and coproduction of street space and social class in marginal, *sha'abi* neighbourhoods like Hay Mohammadi. Observing the proliferation of "a certain number of material and immaterial elements that attest to the multiple attempts made by inhabitants to create a transition space"[116] between the public and the private (1990: 135), Navez-Bouchanine was the first to launch a rigorous methodological inquiry into what (in French) she termed the *limitrophe*. In practical terms, this encompassed a variety of spatial, temporary or permanent material appropriations of street space for domestic and non-commercial leisure activities. Examples could include what I refer to in the beginning of this chapter as the spilling of domestic activities into the street, such as the hanging of laundry on the fence posts along the main avenue in Hay Mohammadi, or the installation of chairs and tables for relaxing in front of the home, but also the illegal extensions to home architecture such as unauthorized gardens and intricate window sills closed off with equally complex iron grills that literally "appropriated the air" around the home (cf. Navez-Bouchanine 1990: 148, Culley 2011: 95). For Navez-Bouchanine, these are all different manifestations of the *limitrophe* (Navez-Bouchanine 2005: 101).

In her view, the emergence of various forms of appropriation in these transition spaces can be seen as a direct consequence of the fast paced urbanisation and expansion of Moroccan cities in the past few decades. Using the example of the walled, old medina, Navez-Bouchanine points to the way in which the transition from private to public used to be mediated (and continues to be so in certain places) by a hierarchical progression of

[116] My translation from the French.

increasingly public spaces: from the relatively private *cul-de-sac* (the impasse, or closed *derb*) to the labyrinthine neighbourhood alleyways, and on to the wide open street (1990: 137). In recent decades, the development of affordable housing on the expanding periphery of urban centres has reduced this buffer zone to a minimum, the threshold of the house remaining the only transition space available to inhabitants. As a consequence, according to Navez-Bouchanine, the inhabitants are forced to appropriate the next best available space, extending the domestic into the immediate vicinity as a functional and defensive way of coping with the "often violent break" between the inside and the outside (1990: 135). Neither fully private nor public, these spaces can be thought of as enlarged thresholds, shifting in both temporal as well as spatial dimensions according to local and personal contingencies.

For her part, Navez-Bouchanine did not attempt to theorize the *limitrophe*, being more concerned with the practical, urban planning applications that her observations might inform. But, drawing on my own observations of these transition spaces and the practices involved in maintaining them in Hay Mohammadi, I argue that in their perpetual negotiation of the public and the private these *limitrophe* spaces can be thought of as a particular spatial manifestation of the practical registers needed to deal with the routinisation of daily struggles. Etymologically, *limitrophe* is derived from the Latin *limit* and the Greek *–trophus* meaning nourishing.[117] While the term originally referred to a border region that supported troops, in Navez-Bouchanine's use the term aptly captures the way in which *limitrophe* spaces support everyday life in Moroccan working-class areas. At the same time, the *limitrophe* is etymologically related to Turner's concept of liminality. Derived from the Latin term *limen,* which literally means a threshold, liminality also contains the spatial in its definition. Although Turner and others after him have been mostly concerned with the temporal aspect of this notion in the context of ritual performances, I would argue that the concept of liminality can also benefit an analysis of spatialized practices in the context of everyday routine.

In working with this distinction between outside and inside, private and public, I think it is important to be mindful of and steer clear of Orientalist notions of the division of space in Muslim societies, while at the same time acknowledging the history of gendered division of and struggle over space in the region (cf. Bourdieu 1970, Vom Bruck

[117] *Collins English Dictionary – Complete and Unabridged*. S.v. "limitrophe." Retrieved December 5 2015 from http://www.thefreedictionary.com/limitrophe

1997). As part of this history, Fatima Mernissi, reputed sociologist and impassioned Moroccan feminist, identified the threshold as the foothold of women's fight since the 1950s to partake in the wider space of Moroccan society (1994). Although Mernissi uses the concept for its poetic power and does not theorize it further, I believe it is particularly salient for a discussion of the blurring of private/public distinctions in the case of Hay Mohammadi. For her part, Navez-Bouchanine also does not go into great detail to define the concepts of public and private in her discussion of the *limitrophe*. She simply equates the private with the domestic and the public as all that is 'not-private' (2005: 103).

What was most striking about the street-scape in Hay Mohammadi, and other working-class areas of Casablanca, was the intense feeling of fluidity and permeability, the absence of rigid borders. As I describe in the opening paragraph to this chapter, in Hay Mohammadi the appropriation of street space for broadly defined private uses reached an impressive scale. Beyond its striking spatial dimension, certain appropriations also seemed to contradict common perceptions regarding norms of propriety and received ideas about privacy in Muslim societies. I was repeatedly struck by the nonchalance with which women and men would hang their laundry (often intimate items like underwear and pyjamas) on the fence lining the neighbourhood's most busy and (seemingly) public avenue. The only concern my interlocutors and key informants registered in regards to this practice was that one would then have to keep an eye out for potential laundry thieves.

Navez-Bouchanine's conclusions with regards to these practices are premised on the pre-existing condition of a certain habitus that is put in crisis by the so-called upheaval of urban life (cf. Bourdieu 1977). She also points out that the accusations made against these *sha'abi* appropriations of urban space as a form of 'ruralization' are unfounded, due to the simple fact that in rural Morocco there have been no similar forms of liminal space documented (1990). In fact, I would argue that the *limitrophe* spaces of Hay Mohammadi not only dramatically influenced the use and perception of neighbourhood space more broadly, but, alongside the commercial and other social forms of encroachment, also contributed to the production of what came to be recognized as the area's working-class, or *sha'abi* character (cf. Ghannam 2011).

Similar to the arguments used to explain informal economic activities, the production and maintenance of the *limitrophe* need to be considered as a combination of pragmatic tactics in the face of economic constraints and individual agency (cf. Zlolniski 2006: 74). Therefore, it is important not to dismiss or diminish the aspect of economic

struggle inherent in these spatial appropriations in Hay Mohammadi. If, as discussed in the beginning of this chapter, economic necessity was the driving force behind the growing encroachment of street vending, the extension of the domestic into the public can also be seen as part of the same logic. As families needed to constantly contend with small living quarters, the sheer lack of available space and facilities literally drove them into the street. In the absence of any facility for drying laundry, makeshift contraptions had been attached to the windows of upper floors, while only a few could consider themselves lucky to have access to rooftop lines – hence the popular usage of the urban infrastructure for the drying of laundry, the cleaning of carpets, or the airing of pillows and blankets. Beyond issues pertaining to domestic cleaning, home spaces were oftentimes insufficient for the large families that resided in them. The absence of small squares for people to gather led to people bringing out chairs and converting street corners into porches.

These pragmatic solutions in turn gave birth to a particular form of lower-class sociality. As women were forced to undertake certain household tasks outside the home, such as cleaning large carpets or preparing meals, children and youth spent their after school hours studying together on thresholds and street corners, and in the blatant absence of playgrounds they transformed the pavement in front of their homes into improvised sandboxes. This particular form of sociality contributed to the sense of community and shared life. However, what some cherished as the particular homeliness of a practice that essentially created a 'poor man's living room' out of the street spaces of Hay Mohammadi (cf. Hall 2012: 57), others saw as the unquestionable marker of class distinction, tinged with the pejorative association of *sha'abi* practices. And although some of my upper-class interlocutors cherished this aspect of life characteristic of such neighbourhoods, they were decidedly averse to actually residing in such an area.

The production and reproduction of liminal spaces in Hay Mohammadi was further intricately entangled with the spatial production and performance of gendered identities. Navez-Bouchanine also touches on this in her writings by pointing out that men are more likely to venture into the public space than to appropriate the area adjacent to the house. Furthermore, if men and youths seemed to be able to traverse the public/private continuum without much concern for sartorial decorum, women's circulation within that same spatial spectrum was marked by subtle changes in dress. The way a woman dressed when leaving the house signalled the degree of public-ness in which she was prepared to engage. Like Asma, many of my female informants would simply throw on a plain *djellaba* over their

house clothes when going for a short shopping trip in the neighbourhood. On a different occasion, when I was meeting Amina for a trip to the Hay Mohammadi Kissaria, I absentmindedly asked why she was taking such a long time to coordinate her outfit and put on makeup. With a mischievous glance she retorted that she had changed her mind and we would be going into downtown Casablanca instead. There is nothing new or revolutionary in pointing out the way in which presenting oneself through dress choice is a way of responding to the type of space and context one frequents. Similar to Julia Elyachar (2012) and Farha Ghannam's (2013) analysis of gendered presentation of the self in the Cairene public space, women and men from Hay Mohammadi took great care in crafting their appearance for trips outside the neighbourhood. Dress was but one of the ways in which private/public distinctions were constructed by people in Hay Mohammadi. These were by no means fixed, but constantly negotiated and mediated by the grey area of the *limitrophe*, a threshold that was both conceptual as well as physically manifested in the small alleyways and side streets of the neighbourhood.

Just as liminality has been predominantly applied to discussions of various forms of temporality, the *limitrophe* area created by inhabitants in Hay Mohammadi also altered with the passage of time. The most significant aspect of this temporality was the everyday character of the blurring between public and private, noticeable in the mundane activities signalling this space. However, even within a daily cycle there were certain patterns to the manifestation of the *limitrophe*. Being attuned to the appropriation and uses of street space in Hay Mohammadi meant that one could tell the time by the different routines of the neighbourhood, visible in the space of the street. The crowds of students in their white *tabliers* (their school overcoats that made them look like armies of lab technicians or tiny pharmacists as one friend observed) suddenly inundating the streets in the middle of the day meant that it was lunch time, while dusk was signalled by the hawkers that emerged with their improvised stalls. Deserted streets and quiet mornings stretching into afternoon signalled Sundays, when the neighbourhood seemed to fall under a sleepy stupor, and Friday was unmistakable by the rush of men heading to mosque with their prayer mats tucked under their arm.

The seasonal rhythms of life added an extra layer to the everyday practices, most visible at times of feast or mourning. On these occasions, large tents would emerge overnight occupying entire alleyways, as families and neighbours gathered to celebrate or commemorate as a community. Oftentimes, the sounds emanating from inside the tents

would be the only way one could tell if the occasion was a happy or a sad one. In August 2013, Asma invited me to accompany her to the circumcision celebration of a friend's son in an older part of Hay Mohammadi. As we arrived at the narrow side street where the family lived, we were greeted by the bright satin folds of a temporary tent occupying the width of the street for the length of three homes on each side. From inside, we could hear the ululations of the women already present, accompanied by the loud bass of the DJ's equipment. I was told this was the women's party, as the men would meet later in the afternoon and pray together and take tea, as was customary. I recognized several neighbourhood youths dressed as waiters. They walked in briskly and served the food and soft drinks, then exited and stood with their backs turned to the debauchery that was unleashed inside, as several women had taken off their headscarves and danced with abandon under the tent's canopy. I asked Asma, if one had to get a permit in order to install a tent, since these temporary constructions often blocked access to the street in question for days at a time, not to mention the noise they would create for the neighbours. "In theory, yes", was Asma's answer. However, the common practice was to tip the local *caïd* (administrator), while the neighbours were appeased with a simple invitation to take part in the celebration. Alongside the comforting routine that revealed itself through these micro-practices, contingency and precarity continued to exist and influence the life of the street.

Conclusion

In this chapter have attempted to understand the significance of Hay Mohammadi street-spaces for the production of livelihoods through the conceptual lens of liminality. Following from this, I explored what implications might be derived from the 'permanentisation' of liminality – making an analogy between Turner's concept and the particular form of constant socio-economic contingency present in the lives of my informants. I have tried to argue that a liminal state is not only a concept fit to describe the extension of the private into the public, but also the broader phenomenon of street space appropriation and use in Hay Mohammadi. The ambiguity of ownership and responsibility over this space, the flexible uses to which it was being put, the multiple lives and meanings supported by the space can all be seen as manifestations of what Victor Turner called "a realm of pure possibility" (1967). In making this claim, however, I do not want to endorse the idea that this was a welcome development. While the myriad creative

practices enlisted in the production of spaces for living and for securing livelihoods should to be lauded for the resourcefulness they demonstrated on the part of the inhabitants, it also essential that one not lose sight of the historical and political contexts that produced the need for such survival mechanisms.

Together with the mixed use of the street space for socializing, sustaining multiple forms of social capital and local identities, being-in-the street in Hay Mohammadi produced a very particular form of community space as well as class identity, specifically what I have repeatedly referred to as *sha'abi* or working-class. The implications of how this image was framed by inhabitants as well as outsiders will be further developed in the next chapters. The ethnographic material presented thus far has tried to demonstrate the local specificities of this lower-class sociality and its relationship to the street spaces of Hay Mohammadi. It has made evident that the politics of the street in Hay Mohammadi were more diffuse than some of the movements bred in other Arab countries during the post-2011 era. They could much more easily be described – echoing Bayat (2010) – as forms of "encroachment". At times, these ordinary tactics colluded with the state in an attempt at securing a temporary space in which one could envision and build a better life, but they could also be read as a means of making visible the effects of decades of structural violence that the disciplining intentions of the state-mandated urban order wanted to conceal.

However, by appealing to a common trope that associated these encroachments with the image of 'the failed economy of Third World states', local administrators and elites were able to malign the street practices I documented in this chapter and infuse them with a very particular moral register. As such, notions of propriety and the moral value of place became entangled with the production of working-class, *sha'abi* spaces and identities. The *sha'abi* street was perceived as backwards, underdeveloped, a step back for the aspiring middle-classes, who deployed the image of the 'chaotic', 'ruralized' urban margins as a way of countering demands of social justice. This in turn worked to re-enforce class distinctions and endorse neo-liberal ideas about urban governance and the norms and forms expected from users of 'public spaces.' In this context, the 'domestication' of Hay Mohammadi street space comes to carry the opposite meaning of what Sharon Zukin terms 'pacification' (1995: 28) or 'domestication by cappuccino' (1998: 2, 2010: 4). If for Zukin domestication entails the 'securitisation' of public spaces and the removal of 'vagrants' and other elements that make the middle-classes

uncomfortable, in the case of Hay Mohammadi the domestication of space was not only a key marker of working-class habitus, but also the counter-narrative to neoliberal ideals of order and 'propriety'.

In documenting this 'domestication' I have tried to avoid essentializing the practices presented here and remain aware of the conflicting reactions they elicited within the community – reactions often inflected by gendered preoccupations which were framed by wider concerns over the moral appropriateness of women's presence in this public space. At the same time, loitering and the forms of male sociality that Hay Mohammadi streets sustained were one of the main spatial practices that provoked ambivalent attitudes and became talked of using moral undertones. If for Walter Benjamin (2004: 420) and Suzanne Hall (2012) such social geographies can be seen as a "poor man's living room", Susan Buck-Morss is careful to remind us not to overly-romanticize this spatialization of working-class practices (1986: 118). While most people in Hay Mohammadi did not strictly speaking need the street as a home, they vitally depended on the ability to appropriate parts of it for pragmatically supplanting a very significant lack. For men, it afforded a space for expressing a particular form of masculine sociality, while for women, it provided them with a safe space which was often devised in response to more aggressive forms of masculinity. As such, the liminal space of the threshold extending into the alleyway provides us with a way into how seemingly facile divisions were complicated, without offering a conclusive response to the question of ownership and responsibility over these spaces.

Moreover, while the apparent durability and 'permanentisation' of contingency was a sign that the regulatory power of the state and its ability to provide for all its citizens had its limits, I argue that this does not foretell the disappearance of the state from the margins. Instead I would claim, that by incorporating the registers of the informal into its everyday operation, the state was able to re-territorialize its presence. The next chapter will take this argument further and explore how a particular image of the street as the source of delinquent behaviour was employed by various stakeholders in their work with marginalized youth in Hay Mohammadi.

Chapter 4 | NGOs and the (a)politics of youth activism on the urban margins

Bghina al huquq	We want our rights
Bghina al hayat	We want our life
Bghina n'aich hna hta al mat	We want to live here until we die
Mabghitch quf dyali beqa ghir kalimat.	We don't want our rhymes to be just words.

- Chorus from the UNICEF sponsored rap song *Bghina hakna* (We want our rights)

On the third and last day of the *Journées de Patrimoine* festival in 2013,[118] I was headed to the disaffected *Anciens Abattoirs* in Hay Mohammadi for a hip-hop and breakdance performance by neighbourhood youth. Outside the sun was shining brightly, but inside the abattoirs the air was cold, and the deep chill was reinforced by the large and rusty meat hooks looming from the ceiling above the area where the performance was to be held. One of several colonial landmarks in the area, the abattoirs were closed in 2002 after eighty years of operation, and the slaughtering activities relocated to a larger facility on Casablanca's southern periphery. While the municipality delayed making a decision on the site's future, the 5 hectares of decaying infrastructure had been appropriated by local cultural activists who hoped to transform the place into a "cultural factory" (Fr. *fabrique culturelle*).

A DJ had set up his equipment and an audience was starting to gather. The young people had assembled themselves in the space at the back of the building, using two support pillars to frame the staging of their performance. They all wore over-sized white and black T-shirts, each carrying a letter printed on the front and the back. Standing in a line together they spelled "Hay Mohammadi". A relatively small piece of tarpaulin had been placed on the floor for a breakdance number, and some of the boys were trying to warm up for the performance. I recognized many faces from the neighbourhood, including several members of the local *jam'iyya* where I had started volunteering (see Introduction), and where the youth had been practicing their dancing and rapping skills on a weekly

[118] See Chapter 1 and 2 for a detailed account and analysis of this annual architectural heritage preservation event.

basis for the past three years as part of the European Union funded project *Arts de Rue* (Street Arts).

After several sound checks the performance commenced accompanied by a menacing soundtrack. Mixing theatrical repertoire with dance choreography and music, the show's narrative was the age-old story of the fight between good and evil. The youth separated into white and black teams and began a dance battle. The girls were just as skilled as the boys, but the latter performed the more dramatic head spins and back-flips to the amazed and enthusiastic cheering of the audience. In the second half of the show, four boys and two girls stepped to the front of the space, while the rest retreated towards the back wall. The rap number started with a song titled *Bghina hakna*, meaning, "We want our rights". The musical arrangement was reminiscent of early 1990s hip-hop, where a male performer would rap the main parts of the piece and the chorus would be sung by melodious female voices. The youths' bodies swayed to the cadence of the rhythm. For the most part, it was obvious they were skilled performers, comfortable with themselves, the audience, and the hip-hop songs they were singing. The acoustics inside the abattoirs, however, were not optimal, which caused the background tune accompanying the rap sections to sound shrill, sometimes covering the rapper's words as it reverberated against the tall cement interior. The audience, five persons deep mid-show, did not seem to mind though, and after three more songs were performed, one of which was dedicated to the mothers of Hay Mohammadi, the enthusiastic applause signalled the end of a successful event. Mehdi, one of the young activists who organized events at the *Abattoirs*, together with an organiser of the *Journées de Patrimoine* festival thanked the youth as well as the staff from the *jam'iyya* while the crowd began to disperse.

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During the fifteen months I spent in Hay Mohammadi I was able to watch variations of this performance several times, in different locations and for diverse occasions. Over the course off my research I came to know the youth involved in the Street Arts programme closely and to learn about their struggles in the neighbourhood. With a few exceptions, they all grew up and lived in the area adjacent to the *jam'iyya,* and came from predominantly working class or lower-middle class families. The staff at the association told me that some of them had been orphaned, while others simply had "difficult" home situations – a euphemism that was used to hint at economic hardship as well as domestic conflicts. A core group of about fifteen teenagers had been taking part in

the *jam'iyya* 's Street Arts programme, which had been initiated in 2011, and were writing their own rap verses in their spare time. I began attending their Saturday afternoon practices in the spring of 2013 as a way of learning about the creative spaces open to neighbourhood youth, and the way in which they used the practice and discourse of Street Arts as both an escape from and a commentary on their life in the neighbourhood. I continued going for the sheer pleasure of seeing them engage in those acts of creativity, but also in order to better understand the complex relationship I saw being forged between local NGOs, state discourses about the urban margins and the international development agendas that influenced the programmes targeting local youth.

The creative space provided by the *jam'iyya* was unique in Hay Mohammadi in several ways that I will detail in this chapter. Beyond a conceptual space, the association provided a physical arena for a group that was regarded by both the state and the older inhabitants as being at risk of falling through the cracks opened by poverty and contingency in the neighbourhood: namely, teenagers and (predominantly male) young adults. As the two previous chapters have shown, neighbourhood space was a collection of intricately linked social geographies, considered to be prone to transgression and moral decay. As a consequence, the *jam'iyya*'s stated aim was to provide the youth with an alternative space where they could experiment, while playfully and powerfully voicing a particular mix of what hip-hop theorist Tricia Rose has called "social alienation [from] and prophetic imagination" of the world around them (Rose 1994: 71). However, as I will discuss below, the framework within which the Street Arts programme was developed and carried out, raised complicated questions about the forms, content and limits of creativity and urban contestation in Hay Mohammadi.

In this chapter, I thus set out to address the complex relationship between youth activism, international development interventions targeting youth, and the re-territorialization of the Moroccan state on the urban margins. By paying particular attention to the growing number of NGOs operating in the neighbourhood during the past decade and their focus on social development programmes targeted at disenfranchised youth, I explore the emergence of a new dominant discourse whose effects, I argue, were the depoliticizing of poverty and marginality, while prescribing desired models for the youth's development.

As I already detailed in Chapter 1, after a period of benevolent neglect that lasted from the 1950s to the late 1960s, followed by the Haussmannian measures of the

'Emergency Urbanism' era in the 1970s and 1980s, the approach of the Moroccan state towards peripheral urban areas like Hay Mohammadi went through a prolonged period of retrenchment owed to the structural adjustment reforms negotiated with the IMF and World Bank in the late 1980s. The restructuring of the state social support system and basic services was accompanied by the growing presence of NGO-based welfare provision. As a consequence, NGOs came to replace previous state structures such as day cares, youth and women's community centres and sports facilities. However, in 2013-2014 a slow re-emergence of the state was taking place on the margins of Casablanca. Partly prompted by the devastating suicide attacks committed in 2003 by disenfranchised youth from a nearby slum (see Chapter 1), the Moroccan state was making use of international development discourses and funding as a way of re-affirming its presence on the urban margins.

In what follows, I begin with an overview of the historical and urban particularities of the social development and cultural activism scene on the margins of Casablanca. Following recent similar engagements in the regional literature (cf. Cohen 2004, Hegasy 2007, Bennani-Chraibi 2010, Khalaf and Khalaf 2011), in the second part of the chapter I take a critical approach towards youth as a social category and look at the ways it was being defined and employed by young people in Hay Mohammadi, as well as its instrumentalization by those working in the NGO sector. Through the close study of the *Arts de Rue* programme, I then explore the limits of a growing tendency to employ a human rights discourse in addressing social inequality on the urban margins. The ethnographic material presented in the third part of the chapter further highlights these limitations as they were materialized during an episode in the spring of 2014, when the state resorted to repressive policing tactics in an attempt at what I call 'disciplining the rough edges' of youth poverty.

An urban ecology of Moroccan hip-hop and community NGOs

The city has always been hip-hop's natural habitat. Considered to be composed of three complimentary parts, rap music, breakdance and graffiti art, from its inception the genre has had a unique spatial dimension. Although hip-hop was born in the Black and Latino post-industrial ghettos of North America, the themes it deals with – social inequality, drugs, violence – have resonated with people around the world. Despite hip-hop's growing commercialisation and co-optation by the pop industry in recent decades, it continues to

appeal to and speak from a marginalized position (Rose 2008). In Morocco, hip-hop, which first began to blossom in the mid-1990s, has been growing into a mainstream cultural phenomenon in recent years, due to artists such as Muslim, a rapper from Tangiers, who had appropriated the global genre and adapted it to the local context, in his case by embedding social critique and messages of resistance within a conservative religious view (Moreno Almeida 2014: 81). Another means by which hip-hop has become mainstream in Morocco is being regarded with more suspicion by fans of the genre. In the first study attempting to chart the emergence of Moroccan hip-hop as a "counterhegemonic cultural discourse", Cristina Moreno Almeida is careful to point out that Moroccan rappers do not necessarily share a common ideology, and that the fragmentation of the local hip-hop scene is sometimes divided along lines of perceived collusion with or against the state (2013: 323).

Specifically, certain rappers have been accused of selling out to the *Makhzen*, the political and economic elite that maintain close ties to the monarchy and are believed to effectively control Morocco.[119] Significantly, some of the young people in the street arts programme mentioned to me the case of El Haqed (Mouad Belghouate), a rapper who had been jailed several times by the state for his critical lyrics about the government (Errazouki 2015). They would then point out to me that other rappers like Don Bigg, who were more "conventional" in their choice of topics, had not risked a similar fate. Moreno Almeida also shows how Don Bigg and other mainstream rappers have tended to adhere to the bounds allowed by the state, which has sometimes guaranteed these artists both media visibility as well as financial support. Drawing on Moreno Almeida's study, and with the help of the ethnographic material I will present here, I argue that the state was trying to co-opt the allure of hip-hop at an even earlier stage. This was accomplished through state-endorsed, foreign-sponsored youth cultural development programmes locally administered by NGOs such as the *jam'iyya*.

The push for such programmes has taken place in a context where the Moroccan state has continued to foster strong cultural and diplomatic ties with the West as part of a policy framework aimed at combating Islamic radicalisation and home-grown terrorism. These efforts intensified in the aftermath of the 2003 suicide attacks in Casablanca, but

[119] Although a detailed discussion of this ruling economic and political elite is beyond the scope of this dissertation, it is important to specify that popular discourse in Morocco acknowledges and often criticizes, albeit in a veiled way, the power and influence of the *Makhzen*. For an in depth discussion see Mohamed Daadaoui's work (2011).

they were based in already existing security concerns that dominated a post-September 11 world. As such, the European Union and the United States began funding youth programmes across North Africa and the Middle East that employ street arts to de-radicalize disenfranchised youth on the urban margins. The historical roots of this type of strategic programme can be traced back to the anti-communist campaigns fought by the West in the 1970s and 1980s through "jambassadors" such as Louis Armstrong and Duke Ellington (Aidi, 2011: 26-28). In 2005 a new US-funded programme called "Rhythm Road" aimed to revive this type of "sound diplomacy" as a way of fighting radicalisation in the Middle East, with the help of hip-hop (ibid: 27). What this model of "sound diplomacy" presumes is an antithetical relationship between hip-hop and Islamist thought, while failing to acknowledge the role of hip-hop in contesting local regimes. In his outstanding work on the history of Islam's with relationship hip-hop, Hisham Aidi has showed how the construction of such antithetical relations is not only erroneous but fails to capture the ways in which anti-extremist campaigns are often co-opted by the state as a way of stamping out anti-regime cultural activism as well (2011: 25). It is within this framework that the Street Arts programme developed at the *jam'iyya* in Hay Mohammadi also needs to be considered.

Neither associational life nor cultural means of resistance are new to Morocco, but it is only in recent decades that their trajectories seem to have been joined under the umbrella of NGOs. To begin with the latter, there is a long tradition of using urban artistic expression for contestation and resistance in Morocco. Hay Mohammadi in particular, as I have argued in the first two chapters, owes its mythical reputation partly to the music band Nass al Ghiwane, whose members blended local musical *Gnawa* influences with American soul and Algerian Rai,[120] as part of a local cultural movement of social protest during the repressive years of Hassan II's rule. Ageing, but still active, the band and its members, the majority of whom were born and lived in Hay Mohammadi, remain a point of reference not only for cultural activists young and old in Morocco, but also for the inhabitants of the neighbourhood. During my early days of fieldwork, mentioning the band was one of the easy ways in which a majority of people tried to initiate conversations about *al-Hay* (the 'hood), as they would phrase it. Pulling up Internet videos of the band's concerts from the 1970s and 1980s, they would translate and decode the subversive

[120] *Gnawa* refers to both a North African Sufi order as well as the trance inducing musical style performed during its ceremonies, which has gained popular acclaim in recent decades. For a historical look at the emergence of *Gnawa* as a mass-marketed sacred musical style see Emilio Spadola (2013).

meaning in the lyrics for me, and recount the history of resistance associated with the neighbourhood. As was mentioned in the previous chapters, this association was one of the ways in which the ordinary inhabitants of the neighbourhood claimed social and cultural capital that was also valued by the wider Moroccan society. Such was the value of this social capital, that newer artists and rappers started to claim origins in Hay Mohammadi as a way of demonstrating their "street cred" and authenticity through the association with this particular strand of *sha'abi* (working class) marginality and the history of resistance.[121] But Moroccan artists were not the only ones capitalizing on this cultural heritage. International social and cultural development programmes like the ones briefly mentioned above, considered the neighbourhood's cultural and historical context to be particularly fertile for the implementation of street arts programmes. As was the case with the heritage festival analysed in the first chapter, the implantation and success of these youth programmes depended heavily on an existing infrastructure of local community organizations such as the *jam'iyya* in Hay Mohammadi.

The historical and political conditions that permitted and encouraged the foundation of community organizations like the *jam'iyya* are also significant for an understanding of the larger dynamics such organizations were part of and engendered in their turn. In what follows, I use the example of the *jam'iyya*'s development and running of the street arts programme to explore the powerful and intricate relationships created between national and international social development initiatives, and what I argue was the depoliticization of cultural activism through the youth programmes operating in Hay Mohammadi. A quick look at the foundation and growth of the *jam'iyya* will serve as a timeline for guiding my discussion of the increasing entanglement of international development agendas and the depoliticization of local problems affecting marginalized youth.

First of all, it is important to situate the foundation of the *jam'iyya* in a context of accelerated growth and increasing reach of the nongovernmental sector in Morocco, which I will refer to as the 'third sector'. Although the latter term has been traditionally used to describe the sum of NGOs, charities and broadly defined civil society initiatives (cf. Elyachar 2003), I purposefully equate the third sector with NGOs for the discussion of Hay Mohammadi at the time of my fieldwork. As I will show, it was often the case that civil society initiatives that did not fit the institutional and organizational model of an

[121] Moreno Almeida, personal communication, June 9, 2013.

NGO were directly or indirectly discouraged by the state,[122] and had difficulty securing financial support (Berriane 2010). As Asef Bayat points out in his analysis of NGO dynamics in the wider Middle East, associational life is not a new phenomenon in the region (2010: 73). As such, the case of the Hay Mohammadi *jam'iyya* also needs to be considered within the framework of the local associational culture.

In Morocco, like in many other countries in the region, religious charities organized around the Islamic notions of compassion for the poor and focused on the collection and distribution of *zakat* and *sadaqa* were some of the earliest examples of local associations.[123] In the twentieth century, labour unions and anticolonial efforts led to the creation of newer forms of secular associational life, particularly in urban areas like Casablanca, although the unions were subsequently considerably disempowered by the de-industrialization that took place during the last decades of the 20th century (Cohen and Jaidi 2006). While many of the traditional associations mentioned above persist to this day, the emergence of the NGO model in the late 1990s aided by the increased penetration of international development agencies onto the Moroccan scene signified a radical shift in the distribution of both money and power across the third sector.[124] Similar to other situations around the globe, many of these NGO initiatives came to fill in the void left by the retreating state. In Morocco the government slowly dismantled and de-funded social-support structures across the country as the direct consequence of the structural adjustment reforms imposed by the IMF and the World Bank beginning in the 1980s (Cohen 2004). Over the past two decades in Morocco, the establishment of the NGO model as the legitimate substitute of previous welfare support structures, I will argue, bred an environment in which social initiatives and community organizations were pressured to conform to the themes recognized as legitimate by the state, while at the same time striving to abide by the funding guidelines of international development institutions.

[122] The Moroccan state also outright banned certain organizations that it deemed threatening to its power. One such notorious example is the case of the Islamist organization called *al-'Adl-w-al-Ihsan* (Justice and Charity). The organization's founder, Abdesslam Yassine, was held under house arrest for many years due to his open criticism of King Hassan II. He was released in 2000 by Mohammed VI. The organization is generally tolerated by the Moroccan state, but it has no formal legal status and continues to be closely watched by the State.

[123] As one of the Five pillars of Islam, *zakat* is the obligation to give alms to the poor, and is distinguished from *sadaqa*, which is a voluntary form of charity contribution.

[124] An interesting comparison to this is Julia Elyachar's documentation of local crafts associations on the margins of Cairo. In her work she shows how these existing forms of civil society organizations were able to adapt and deploy the NGO model to meet new funding requirements and continue to survive in an era of increasing standardisation of social welfare according to international development guidelines (Elyachar 2003).

Abdeljalil Bakkar, the acting president of the *jam'iyya* in Hay Mohammadi in 2013-2014 (introduced in Chapter 1), had grown up in Hay Mohammadi and was supporting his small family on a civil servant's salary, when in 2003 he decided to dedicate himself completely to the creation and running of the *jam'iyya*. In his early fifties at the time of my fieldwork, Mr. Bakkar had lived his entire life in the Derb Moulay Cheriff quarter. While several of his close relatives had migrated abroad he remained in the family home that continued to house his aging mother alongside his own wife and two children. After his decision to work full time in the NGO sector, Mr. Bakkar dedicated ten years to growing the local association into an organization that could make a difference in the lives of the neighbourhood's youth. During a meeting in the early stages of my fieldwork, he described the context for the creation of the association thus:

> "As young people in the neighbourhood, ten years ago, we looked around us and what we saw was terrible. The *Dar Shabab* (Youth House) was closed, the cinema Saada also closed, and there were no spaces for youth to study, read, stage theatre plays. My cousins from France came to visit every summer, and they saw how young people just hung around in the street doing nothing.[125] They told me about an association working in their neighbourhood outside Paris, and the kind of things they did there. So we got together, about ten of us from our street (*zanqa*), and decided to create an association, a *jam'iyya*, to do something for our neighbourhood."

The early 2000s were indeed a favourable time for setting up an NGO in Morocco. With the accession of King Mohammad VI to power in 1999 following the death of his father, a period of social reform and openness towards civil society ensued, also intensified in part, some believed, by the 2003 attacks. In 2005, the King launched a nation-wide programme called the National Initiative for Human Development (*Initiative Nationale pour le Development Humain*, hereafter INDH). As Yasmine Berriane's work on the creation and implementation of this social development programme shows, this was by no means a novel approach (2010: 93). Although previous state programmes had been created towards the end of the 1990s to address social inequality, the launch of the INDH marked a transition towards a clear embrace of the discourse and participatory practices advocated by global trends in development policy (2010: 94). Because it is beyond the scope of this chapter to go in detail into the workings of the INDH, I will only briefly describe how the

[125] Similar to many of my research interlocutors, the president of the *jam'iyya* had extended family who had migrated to France and other Western European countries during the past decade in search for work, but who maintained close ties to their relatives in Morocco, providing occasional financial support.

creation of this structure intersected with the emergence of local community organizations like the *jam'iyya* and how it impacted their activities.[126]

On a very basic level, the main role of the INDH was to disburse financial support from the state to local NGOs across the country, predominantly in areas identified as priority sites (*sites prioritaires*).[127] Between 2005 and 2010 this amounted to ten billion dirhams (about 700 million pound sterling), provided in part by the Moroccan state, the World Bank and the European Union, as well as private donors such as the King of Saudi Arabia (Berriane 2010: 94). Through the creation of local INDH committees at priority sites like Hay Mohammadi, the state argued it would be able to identify local NGOs and projects that could benefit from INDH support.[128] The *jam'iyya* was one of the NGOs in Hay Mohammadi that applied for and received financial support from the INDH. However, even though, as Berriane's earlier mentioned study points out, these contributions meant a significant increase in the budget of many struggling local associations, for the most part they were insufficient and constituted but a small part of an association's operating budget. But, as I was able to learn from my discussions with Mr. Bakkar and other members of the *jam'iyya*, it appeared that beyond the financial support of the INDH, membership in its network of grantees was already considered to be a sign of distinction and validation, which would most certainly enable them to win other grants in the future. As such the injection of symbolic capital that an INDH grant provided to the *jam'iyya* was just as, if not more, important than the actual grant. Moreover, Mr. Bakkar pointed out that gaining access to the network of grantees enabled them to attend various trainings and workshops that provided them with useful tools in growing their understanding of and ability to function in the NGO funding landscape.

Another level on which this validation functioned was the creation of a hierarchy of fundable projects and themes that were deemed worthy of state support. The INDH's

[126] For an in-depth analysis and description of the INDH from a political economic point of view, see Berriane (2010) and Zaki (2011).

[127] There is an interesting comparison here with the "*territoires touchées*" designation elaborated in the report of the Truth and Reconciliation commission in 2006, which dealt with the human rights abuses of Hassan II's rule (1961-1999). By keeping these terminologies separate, the political and historical causes for the pauperisation of many of these regions was occluded, which it targeted separately through the INDH programmes.

[128] The organization and operation of the INDH is highly territorialized and hierarchical, as local committees were set up at each priority site composed of local representatives of the state, elected council members, and representatives of the NGOs in the area. The NGO leaders are supposed to propose projects for funding, and the representatives of the state evaluate these propositions in several phases that eventually reach the region's governor for final approval. At the head of this decision-making pyramid sits the Prime Minister (Berriane 2010: 94).

main points of focus were predominantly represented by youth programmes, women's literacy and crafts projects, as well as revenue producing activities such as sewing, or small-scale food production and its sale (cf. Berriane 2010: 95).[129] While the state was right to identify these social categories as particularly vulnerable and therefore in need of support, this approach also limited the scope and types of projects that received funding. As one member of the *jam'iyya* told me with some concern, once a type of project would be recognized as fundable and thus legitimated with the INDH's stamp of approval, it invariably led to the replication and multiplication of that approach throughout the area, marginalizing alternative project ideas before they could even get formulated. As a consequence, she claimed, one could find a multitude of sports courts and women's sewing groups, while applications from male traders for micro-credits often went rejected.

Given this context, I move on to look at how the *jam'iyya*'s youth programme both challenged and adhered to the structural limitations created by this status-quo, in ways which reveal significant aspects of how the state was present on the margins through the work of social programmes.

Youth, street arts and rights-based forms of discourse and activism

As discussed in previous chapters, the *jam'iyya* had been crucial in the commemorative projects as well as the heritage festival's development in Hay Mohammadi. Its participation in the elite networks that had organized and run these projects resulted in the accumulation of a certain amount of locally-recognized social capital, which also played a role in the *jam'iyya*'s capacity to continue attracting both national as well as international funding. Adding to this, the ability of its members to converse in French, and therefore appeal to internationally connected funders, meant that the *jam'iyya* had an advantage over other local organizations where members spoke only Arabic (cf. Berriane 2010, Boutieri 2012). Furthermore, the projects developed by the *jam'iyya* had been focused from its inception on local youth, another aspect that made them a natural match for the INDH as well as other state-sponsored charities or funding mechanisms. Described by both Mr. Bakkar and many of the founding members with whom I spoke, as a "youth

[129] In the case of these income-generating projects there was a marked preference for supporting women, something I was told by the local head of the Hay Mohammadi INDH committee during an interview in 2013. This gender approach was of course in line with the recommendations of international organisms such as the World Bank and the United Nation's Development Programme(UNDP), but my interlocutor also stressed that he personally believed that women should be given preference since they were "morally inclined to carry through" their projects and support their families, whereas men might instead spend the income on their vices (i.e. cigarettes and alcohol).

association" or an initiative started by "neighbourhood youth" (either in French as *les jeunes du quartier,* or in Moroccan Arabic as *ash-shabab al-hay*), the *jam'iyya* did focus its efforts almost exclusively on this age and social group.

Therefore, before going any further, it is important to take a critical look at the uses and definition of 'youth' both in the context of Hay Mohammadi as well as in scholarly and international development discourses operating in the region. At the *jam'iyya* the term youth (*ash-shabab*) was used rather loosely, in reference to people ranging in age from their teens into their thirties, and employed interchangeably with *drari*, meaning kids, or children. While the latter could be used to express the affectionate ties of friendship among the staff members as well as the various people who attended the *jam'iyya's* programmes*,* it was nevertheless understood that married men and women were no longer 'youth'. The fact that someone in their early thirties could be described as youth hinted at the structural and economic hardships that prevented these people from securing stable jobs, marrying and setting up independent households. Thus, the programmes developed by the *jam'iyya* that I examine in this chapter – the *Arts de Rue*, and a youth employment counselling project I consider briefly later in the chapter – were specifically targeted at people either still in school or in the process of looking for a job, two variables commonly used by international development institutions such as the UNDP to define youth as a demographic group (WYR 2013).

It should not be forgotten, however, that for many years in the late 1990s and 2000s, Arab youth were often associated with radical Islam and terrorist movements, a trend that continues to this day.[130] For several decades, scholars as well as international development discourse and publications have been calling attention to a growing population of young people whose job and educational prospects were poor, and made even grimmer by the worldwide economic crisis of 2008. In recent years, this demographic group has come under particular scrutiny, both internationally as well as in the region. In articles carrying titles such as "Young, angry, and wired",[131] international media put youth at the centre of their reporting on the 2011 Arab uprisings. It is now

[130] Asef Bayat's paper titled "Does Islamic militancy have an urban ecology" (2007) critically engaged with a widely held belief that urban youth in Middle Eastern countries were at an increased risk of Islamic radicalisation. There is of course an entire literature dealing with the particularly insidious forms of criminalization, policing and violence against Palestinian youth, who were seen as particularly prone to 'terrorism' after the first Intifada (cf. Peteet 1994). This discursive trend seems to be resurging in 2014-2015 with the emergence of the Islamic State in Syria (ISIS) as a pull for disenfranchised youth from the region.
[131] This was the title of a feature length piece published by National Geographic magazine in the months following the Arab uprisings in 2011. See http://ngm.nationalgeographic.com/2011/07/middle-east-youth/bartholet-text.

widely agreed that the events of the Arab Spring were largely carried forth by young people, disenfranchised and disenchanted with the status quo in the region. This is not a new phenomenon: already in 1979 in Iran, youth were a force to be reckoned with by both local regimes as well as international observers (Bayat 2010: 106), and a recent review article of the history of protest movements in Morocco also cites youth as a constant driving force behind such contestation activities since the 1960s (Essahel 2015).

Generally defined in reports by institutions such as the World Bank as people between the ages of 15 to 24,[132] youth, however, is an unstable analytical category, as Bayat (2007), following Bourdieu (1993), has pointed out in his research on the region. Following Margaret Mead's classic study *Coming of Age in Samoa* (1952), anthropologists have mostly approached youth as an entry-point into researching notions of personhood (Tait 1993), inter-generational dynamics, sub-cultures (Brake 1980) and identity construction (Bucholtz 1999). Beyond this, a significant body of anthropological scholarship has also engaged with child labour (Gailey 1999, Bass 2004) and early learning (Kurban and Tobin 2009). Nevertheless, as Bourdieu rightly shows (1993:98), recent discourses talking about youth as a unified social category occlude significant material, educational, gender and class differences, which become important when looking at youth as a force for revolution and social change. For his part, Bayat, while acknowledging Bourdieu's concerns, maintains that it is still possible to talk about youth without falling into the trap of homogenisation by focusing on 'youthfulness' and its role in mobilizing young people around social movements in the region (2010: 107). In Bayat's view, youthfulness is less connected to a precise age bracket, and more meaningfully understood as a particular form of habitus associated with "being young" (ibid.). For the argument I am putting forth in this chapter, I draw on Bayat's conceptualisation of youthfulness as a way of disentangling the relationship between young people, local social (non)movements (ibid.), and the NGO programmes targeting them in Hay Mohammadi.

In Bayat's view, the aspirations and cognitive dispositions pertaining to youthfulness in the regional context of the Middle East and North Africa need to be considered as essentially modern, urban phenomena facilitated by the myriad spaces

[132] Such reports are often cited in reference to the growing size of young populations in the Middle East and North Africa, reported to constitute 20 per cent of the entire population in countries like Morocco, Tunisia, Egypt, and Libya to cite but a few. For further information on these statistics see UNDP Arab Human Development Report 2009 available from http://www.arab-hdr.org/contents/index.aspx?rid=5

provided by a city to its young people. In other words, youthfulness exists in a dialectical relationship with youthful geographies. Alongside street corners, shopping malls, and parks, Bayat also mentions youth centres as the physical spaces where a collective identity focused on youthfulness might emerge. To draw once more on Bourdieu, this collective identity used to be forged in the spatial arrangement of the mass-education system: public schools and high schools. In Morocco however, as elsewhere in the region, the increasing decline of public education in recent years has diminished the prestige it once held in the eyes of the aspiring working classes (cf. Boutieri 2012). Alongside this traditional realm for the young, NGOs that are focused on youth and 'social development' are increasingly becoming the new spaces where a particular youthful collective identity is being shaped. Compared to Foucault's (1975) analysis of the school as part of the same category of disciplining spaces as the prison and the insane asylum, the alternative space of the youth NGO and the relative freedom of the extracurricular activities provided by the *jam'iyya* might be considered liberating. This, however, would be a false dichotomy, since, as I will show, the *jam'iyya* in Hay Mohammadi also regulated its space and disciplined the youth's bodies, albeit guided at times by different agendas and with limited success. Specifically, the agendas that guided the directions of the *jam'iyya*'s youth programmes were heavily influenced by Morocco's pledge to international allies and their shared agendas for de-radicalisation.

Already in the discourses employed in the framing of youth programmes in the region, a clear educational and disciplining agenda was visible. In the political and social climate following the shocking suicide attacks of May 2003, the Moroccan state, with the help of international donors, redoubled their efforts focused on "de-radicalisation of marginalized youth at risk" (Khalaf and Khalaf 2011). Indeed, in 2003, shortly after making an application for a space, the *jam'iyya* was given the lease for a building owned and operated by the Mohammad V Foundation, a royal charity named after Morocco's post-independence monarch and founded by King Mohammad VI.[133] The building was shared with a local day-care, but the association had its own separate entrance and used the upper floor space. The stated mission of keeping youth off the street and away from its

[133] The charity's full title is the "Mohammad V Foundation for Solidarity", and was created in 1999 by the then soon-to-be King Mohammad VI, as one of the poverty-fighting programmes which he has continued to support. Self-styled as the "King of the Needy", King Mohammad VI has made poverty alleviation his main priority since taking the throne after his father's death. The INDH and the *Cities without Slums* programme which will be discussed in the next chapter are part of the same timeline of programmes created by the monarch.

pernicious influences was what guided the initial programmes and activities provided by the *jam'iyya*. Later, the association also tried to introduce activities for stay-at-home women (*femmes au foyer)*, but in 2013-14 that programme was yet to be launched.[134] One of the young women coordinating the programmes at the association during my fieldwork recounted how she was a first-year university student when the *jam'iyya* first opened its doors to the neighbourhood youth. She fondly remembered how one of the rooms served as a study library and reading room where the silence was rigorously enforced. "It really helped my studies so much," she reminisced.

A theatre group was also formed and one of the rooms was transformed with the help of another small grant into a practice area and performance stage. One wall was covered in mirrors, while the others were painted in bright colours. In late 2014, during an event organized by a network of international volunteers, the walls were given a fresh makeover, and graffiti designed and painted by the local youth lent the space a vibrant look. The slightly elevated stage occupying one end of the room featured heavy velvet curtains and a small collection of props that the youth used for their theatre and dance shows. What began as a small theatre activity in 2003 eventually grew into the Street Arts programme. Its full title, as shown on the funding documents, was "*Les Arts de Rue en Méditerranée*" (Street Arts in the Mediterranean); everyone at the *jam'iyya* simply referred to it as *Arts de Rue*. When I arrived in Hay Mohammadi in January 2013, the *jam'iyya* had just celebrated a decade of activity the previous year, and the *Arts de Rue* programme had been running successfully for almost two years, having become the association's flagship project. The concept and content of the programme, I found out, had been elaborated by a young French woman, who had worked as a volunteer at the *jam'iyya* for two years, but was no longer there at the time of my research. The funding had been provided by the European Union, and the main artistic result of the project, which the *jam'iyya* occasionally used to attract further potential funders, was a video of a rap song produced in late 2011. Titled *Bghina hakna* ('We want our rights'), the song was relatively long, at almost seven minutes, and had a two-minute spoken-word introduction to the actual rap song. The narrative conveyed by the lyrics touched on the theme of youth,[135] poverty and urban marginalization, while constantly re-affirming the youth's

[134] One of the active members in the *jam'iyya* speculated that the problem was that there were too many women's associations and groups being founded in the neighbourhood, which meant the area was saturated with these types of programmes.
[135] See Appendix C for a full transcript of the song's lyrics.

allegiance to their country, their birthplace and their home. The demands for a dignified life voiced in the song hinged on the legitimacy of a human right's discourse echoing the ERC's agenda (see Chapter 1 and 2), particular children's rights, and remained within the limits of propriety by avoiding any harsh language or strong imagery.

The video accompanying the song had been shot with the help of UNICEF as the message so strongly centred on the topic of children's rights – although some of the staff emphasized to me that it had not been easy to secure what amounted to the limited financial and logistical support of the international organization. The rap song was the fruit of a workshop organized at the height of the *Arts de Rue* programme, in 2011. The *jam'iyya* had invited several facilitators from France and Morocco, with experience in running spoken word and rap-writing workshops, to work with the youth for the production of a series of songs, as well as a public performance for the neighbourhood. In an unexpected turn of events, while accompanying an acquaintance to a gallery opening in one of the chic neighbourhoods of Casablanca in September 2013, I met one of the Moroccan men who had helped run the workshop in 2011. After introducing himself, Omar remembered with admiration and sympathy the time he had spent working with the children and teenagers at the *jam'iyya*. We exchanged words about the youth still attending the hip-hop and dance activities, discovering that we were similarly smitten with their talents. Pausing for a moment, Omar added that he did regret one thing, namely the limits that he sensed were being imposed on the workshops by those directing the *jam'iyya*. When I pressed him further on this point, he said it had been a shame that the president felt he had to keep things apolitical, and had feared to go further with the exercise. But Omar claimed that he would have liked to push the youth to speak about the "harsher aspects of their daily lives in Hay Mohammadi".

On the one hand, my initial reaction to Omar's statement was to remain critical of the differences in the way outsiders viewed the area and how the inhabitants themselves spoke about it, something I already discussed in Chapter 2 where I cautioned against the reification or romanticizing of crime, poverty and marginalization discourses. On the other hand, it is also true that Omar's concerns were not entirely unfounded. The benign lyrics in *Bghina hakna* and the single-minded focus on human-rights as a way of demanding recognition of and means for a dignified life could only go so far in addressing the root causes of the neighbourhood's disenfranchisement, and the problems faced by the youth

living there.[136] As I have shown in the preceding chapters, this approach had proven fruitful in the case of those demanding reparations for the crimes committed by the state during the 'Years of Lead'. However, the enduring and more diffuse effects of structural violence, partly visible in the high unemployment rates, school dropout statistics, and general degradation of Hay Mohammadi's urban fabric, were less likely to find redress via a rights-based discourse. In fact, the songs that the youth wrote on their own, scribbled furtively in the backs of school notebooks they shyly showed me, spoke of grittier realities, describing young people who were angry, sometimes hungry, both literally and figuratively. Both in song and in real life, the youth in the *Arts de Rue* programme aspired to dress in the same fashion as Western rappers and singers they saw on TV and Internet videos. Several songs spoke of their concern of failing their parents,[137] tested by the everyday dangers of cheap, illegal substances available on street corners.[138]

Although no one could stop them from writing these songs, it was telling that they were seldom performed at any of the events I attended from 2013 to 2014 where the youth were meant to represent the *jam'iyya*. At events such as the Heritage Days Festival, or the international book fair in Casablanca where they had been invited by the National Human Rights Council (*Conseil National des Droits de l'Homme*, or CNDH), the youth would invariably perform *Bghina hakna*, which had become a staple of every show, either followed or preceded by a breakdance number. While it is understandable that they would present a specific image to authorities as well as potential sponsors and elites, the *jam'iyya* also engaged in a certain amount of curating and disciplining during the *Arts de Rue* weekly practices. This entailed various forms of control over the young people's bodies and their presentation. Sandals and flip-flops were not allowed inside the *jam'iyya*, as I was informed during the summer of 2013. Boys who arrived wearing shorts were sent home to change, and girls were not permitted to wear visible make up. It should also be mentioned that only one of the teenage girls who attended the workshops wore a headscarf, which she matched with clothing that mirrored that of her unveiled peers in its youthful, Western style. Punctuality was fiercely enforced, and on many occasions I saw

[136] For a different perspective on the use of human-rights discourses and aesthetic regimes associated with them in the context of political struggles in Palestine see Lori Allen (2009).
[137] One of the young men in the rap-writing workshop who was considered by the *jam'iyya* staff to be the most talented of the group, read to me on one occasion a song he had been working on. The story spoke of a young man who wanted to look after his family, but could not find a job and his despair had driven him to steal and do drugs, which broke his mother's heart and caused her early death. After a while, I became aware of these themes recurring in other youth's writing as well.
[138] These themes are also some of the most common tropes in rap music. See Tricia Rose (2014).

upset youths sent home because they had arrived late or had missed a previous practice. The staff also discouraged excessive chatting or un-organized hanging out at the *jam'iyya*, although occasionally tolerated if in small enough numbers. One of the theatre instructors told me all of these rules and restrictions were necessary, because otherwise the youth would go wild. In this manner they would learn to be proper, well-behaved people, "*nass mezzianin*".[139]

Some of the youths occasionally rebelled, refusing to attend the programme for weeks at a time, while the majority of them seemed to accept this arrangement and continued to come and abide by the rules. Youthfulness in this case was constantly re-negotiated between the young and those who provided them with a space to engage in the artistic activities that played a large part in the youths' identity-making practices. For the *jam'iyya,* however, youthfulness also seemed to be about the image and performance of the 'good youth from the `hood (*weld al hay*)' that needed to be tailored to the various perceived requirements and expectations of audiences, funders, and the state. Given this context, the use of hip-hop, which has been the domain of resistance and contestation vis-à-vis power, was a tense and strategic act (cf. Nassar 2011). From this point of view the marriage between human rights discourses and street arts seemed to be at best an uncomfortable one, needing constant re-framing and control.

If right-based discourses have been developed as a way of moving development work from the realm of charity into that of legally enforceable claims, this move has not always been successful. As Srilatha Batliwala argues in her essay "When rights go wrong" (2011), the language of human rights has become diluted by the deluge of international development projects that can be endorsed and supported by any authoritarian state without necessarily compelling it to enact any actual economic or social agendas. Moreover, because a rights-based discourse could mobilize consensus more effectively than earlier movements that had focused on social and economic aims, it quickly gained popularity in development circles.

Thus, if we consider the evolution of a rights-based discourse as promoted by both international development agendas as well as the Moroccan state beginning with the reign of King Mohammad VI in 1999, it becomes obvious that this shift has been not only encouraged but also strategically appropriated by the Moroccan state. Similar to findings

[139] This focus on discipline and structured routines has also been described and discussed as a common pedagogical approach in the context of North American inner city reform schools. See Lucas (1999) and Manno et al. (1999).

reported elsewhere (Bayat 2010), a rights-based approach has increasingly come to replace a social and political framework for both framing and understanding problems on the urban margins as well as demanding redress from the state. This paradigm shift is not unique to Morocco or the region, and scholars of international development, including anthropologists, have both documented and thoroughly critiqued the drawbacks of this rights-based discourse in other national and regional contexts (cf. Hobart 1993, Riles 2006). In Morocco, its emergence is relatively recent, but the effects are similar. Partly influenced by the availability of funding for development projects focused around a rights-based discourse, the prevalence of this framing has had a significant impact on the way in which social contestation and civil society demands were being phrased and approached in Hay Mohammadi at the time of my field research.

The dynamic evidenced in this brief history and trajectory of the *Arts de Rue* project reveals how some of this depoliticization was being effected as part of the relationship between the Moroccan state and NGOs in places like Hay Mohammadi. On the one hand the involvement of the State in the funding, running, and evaluation of social-development projects was welcome in the eyes of local activists and community leaders who had spent many years trying to obtain the necessary resources to rehabilitate the area. As previous chapters have shown, many of the public infrastructures that had been in place for youth during the 1960s and 1970s had suffered a long period of decay, owing to the combination of economic and political factors that marked the period from 1965 to 1999. Local cinemas were closed down and left in a state of ruin, youth clubs (*Dyur Shabab*) had suffered from increasing defunding and lack of human resources, public parks, playgrounds, and gardens had seen their gates shuttered and became overgrown for lack of municipal money for upkeep. The reaffirmation of the State's presence on the urban margins through social and charity programs started under the aegis of King Mohammad VI, inspired a renewed sense of hope for those in the third sector, like Abdeljalil Bakkar.

However, by focusing funding and support for programmes addressing youth as a social category at risk, the discourse that was constructed and circulated as part of this framework for local development refashioned this particular group into an isolated problem. Framing the problems faced by youth within a vaguely defined human rights context, the discourse of artistic productions such as the *Bghina hakna* song occluded and failed to address the historical, political and economic roots of these problems. Once the

state had approved of the benign image of Street Arts employed in such youth programmes it also led to the proliferation of similar programmes. As such, during the fifteen months I spent in Hay Mohammadi there were almost a dozen street-art-related projects and events that reached out to the *jam'iyya* for logistical support as well as invitations for the *Arts de Rue* youth to perform.

While the arguments in favour of a rights-based approach to social development often stress accountability as one of the advantages afforded by such a method, in Morocco there is no official legal framework that can implement such accountability measures. Therefore, the ensuing effect was one of "artification" of everyday realities,[140] which lead to the superficial engagement with problems affecting youth on the margins, promoting and circulating stereotypical images of urban street culture that did not attempt to take a more in-depth look at the grittier reality of those margins. In the next section I look at what happened when the raw and unmediated image of precarious youth, crime and marginality disturbed the sanitized, commoditised aesthetic that has been used to domesticate and romanticize the rough edges of poverty, violence and urban sub-cultures.

Street artist or delinquent gang thug?

On a late Saturday afternoon in the spring of 2014, I was leaving Hay Mohammadi after having spent the day at the *jam'iyya* with the young people attending the *Arts de Rue* activities. I had watched them skilfully practice their head spins and moving their bodies across the dance floor as they mouthed the words to American hip-hop and pop songs. For a while I forgot we were in Hay Mohammadi at all. As I stepped out into the street and headed for home, an unusual level of commotion seemed to have overtaken the neighbourhood. Four police vans were parked at the top of the street and policemen in uniform were running up and down the narrower streets that branched out from the one I was on.

Dumbfounded, I asked one of the young men I recognized on the street what was going on. Seeming to share my confusion, he shook his head also staring in the direction of the vans. "Maybe they are chasing away the street vendors?", he speculated as we continued to watch the incomprehensible presence of such a show of force. Another boy I

[140] Following Howard Becker (1984), I see "artification" as a symptom of the depoliticization of cultural forms of resistance. A salient example that resonates with the material discussed here is what happens when graffiti art is installed in art galleries, thus removing it from its original context of resistance and contestation.

knew from the *Arts de Rue* programme ran up and told us what was happening. "They are picking up everyone without an ID", he breathlessly managed to say. Trying to make light of what seemed like an absurd situation, I said I might get in trouble because I often forgot to carry an ID with me. Both boys chuckled, while the latter said: "No, not girls. They're only picking up the boys. Especially the ones who have the *banda* haircuts." What he meant was the fashionable cut all teenage boys had been getting that year, a Mohawk style that they had seen on football players and that had become a signature style, first among the local Ultras (fanatical football supporters)[141] and then for young *sha'abi* men around the country.

In the following days and months following the scene, these raids swept every working-class neighbourhood in large cities across Morocco, drawing national media attention.[142] By targeting a specific population – the predominantly disadvantaged, marginalized and racialized poor youth of the urban fringe – these raids amounted to what Didier Fassin has called "petty states of exception: the temporally, geographically and juridically limited forms of non-respect of the rule of law within democratic regimes" (2014: 105).[143] Officially, the action was described by the authorities as a fight against a growing "sense of lack of safety due to delinquency",[144] which had apparently been getting out of hand in these neighbourhoods. In the press the timing of the state's action was linked to the intervention of King Mohammad VI a month after the armed robbery of a hair salon in an up-scale neighbourhood of Casablanca, followed by the mobbing of a local professional football player.[145] Although there had been no official statement from the Monarch, according to the media, the King had demanded that the Interior Minister

[141] The local Ultras were the fans of the two rival Casablanca football teams, the Wydad and Raja football clubs, and were generally viewed as harmless, loosely organised factions that taunted each other but never openly engaged in violence in the neighbourhood. However, whenever the fans of the FAR Rabat team would come for a game in Casablanca security measures would be increased, due to a history of severe acts of vandalism the Rabat Ultras were infamous for.

[142] No official police statistics were released in relation to the number of arrests made during the *Tcharmila* raids. Speculations in the media varied widely – some sources cited 10,300 suspects while others claimed 103,714 had been arrested nationally in the first three months of 2014. See http://www.leconomiste.com/article/930441 Accessed September 24, 2015.

[143] While it might be argued that Morocco is not a democratic regime per se, for the purposes of this discussion I am assuming that as a parliamentary monarchy that regularly holds free-elections the Moroccan system can be considered to ascribe to democratic principles.

[144] See http://www.leconomiste.com/article/930441-ins-curit-que-cache-l-op-ration-tcharmil Accessed on June 14th, 2014.

[145] http://telquel.ma/2014/04/01/plus-de-100-000-suspects-interpelles-au-maroc-durant-le-1er-trimestre-2014_133959 Accessed on June 25th, 2014.

increase efforts "to ensure that citizens feel safe in their cities".[146] In fact, before the authorities unleashed this wave of arbitrary arrests targeting male youth in marginalized neighbourhoods, a growing clamour of voices on online forums and Internet groups had been demanding an end to the "war" that was raging on the streets of Casablanca.[147] Those voices claimed that a new class of youth were threatening the everyday life of "honest citizens", and had created an Internet group calling for a "march against lack of ambient safety in Casablanca" (*Marche Contre L'Insécurité Ambiante à Casa*).

Even at the time of my fieldwork, as the events were unfolding before my eyes, it was difficult to disentangle the ideas and perceptions of those who decried the growing lack of safety on the streets of Casablanca and their identification of a particular typology of the male aggressor, from an actual emergence of a new masculine youth sub-culture on the urban margins. Very soon, a term for designating this new type of male delinquent appeared, and its repeated use naturalized its presence, occluding even further any originating source or context. This term was *Tcharmila*. In darija, *charmoula* signifies a marinade used for the preparation of meat. None of my informants could tell me with any approximation when the term might have entered the slang vocabulary of marginalized urban youth. Its popularisation, however, was aided by the use of online social networks for the display and circulation of images that intended to capture the essence of *Tcharmila*. As such, the phenomenon was ostensibly a visual one, as I will detail below. The power exerted by these images on the collective social imagination was so overwhelming that it managed to set off the series of raids and police interventions I witnessed during the spring of 2014, and caused the media to question whether the phenomenon constituted a real threat or a general moral panic.[148]

Youness, one of the young men from the neighbourhood who regularly attended the *Arts de Rue* programme, told me that in his understanding *Tcharmila* had started as a dress style. Youness was one of three brothers who attended the different youth programs at the *jam'iyya* , their family home being a short walk away from the association's

[146] This phrase became widely used in the media at the time, as a way of assuring people that all actions were taken in the general interest of the greater public. The exact phrasing was "*afin de consolider le sentiment de sécurité chez les citoyens*." See http://www.yabiladi.com/articles/details/24736/maroc-l-insecurite-colere-royale-font.html Accessed on June 25th, 2014.

[147] Although, like I mention, arrests were carried out as part of a sweeping campaign meant to deal with urban gangs and delinquency in all large Moroccan cities, Casablanca and the smaller cities neighbouring it were the focus of the operation, and according to wide-spread public opinion, the source of the growing delinquency.

[148] In the reputed weekly magazine *TelQuel*, an article titled "Phénomène Tcharmil: psychose ou vrai danger?" posed this uncomfortable question. See http://telquel.ma/2014/04/04/le-phenomene-tcharmil-psychose-ou-vrai-danger_133999 Accessed on April 9th, 2015.

building. They were often softly chided for missing practices, but always praised to me by the dance instructors for their diligence and reputation as 'good boys' who stayed out of trouble. According to Youness, the *banda* haircuts were paired with tracksuits, visible white socks sticking from brand-name sport shoes, and gold watches.[149] During a similar discussion at the home of Asma's mother, when several of Asma's young male cousins were in attendance, the general consensus seemed to echo that of my other interlocutors from the neighbourhood. According to them, at some point in 2013 young men started posing like this for photos that they would then upload on their Facebook profiles. Some of the other young men at the *jam'iyya* speculated that the reason why the term "*mcharmil*" (singular, designating someone who was part of *Tcharmila*) caught on, was that it was derived from the butcher knives used for the preparation of *charmoula* (marinade), and sometimes donned by the youth in the circulated photos, as a way of impressing those who would see them.

The reports in the media were more inclined to describe the "*mcharmlin*" (pl.) as engaging in acts of intimidation by displaying butcher knives and stolen goods – as was speculated about the golden watches boastfully paraded by the young men in the photos. Some of the photos that were circulated online as illustrations of *Tcharmila* did appear to be connected to illegal activities such as the sale and consumption of hashish. This type of photo never featured people, but depicted exclusively an inventory of illicit and *haram* substances like cigarettes, alcohol, and drugs.[150] The framing featured the objects photographed in a manner that called to mind a still-life aesthetic through the arrangement of objects in the centre of a table (Fig. 14). These photos together with others in which teenage boys posed with long butcher knives and sabres, were however a minority among the multitude of images simply depicting young boys, and occasionally girls, wearing track suits and proudly displaying status objects like smartphones or brand name clothing and fashionable sports shoes.

[149] The overall aesthetics of this style are comparable to the British youth subculture of "chavs". For a recent account of the role played by the media in the vilification of working class culture in Britain see Jones (2011).

[150] *Halal* refers to all that is permitted by Islamic jurisprudence, be it goods, food products, or acts. *Haram* designates the opposite of halal, and is predominantly used to designate sinful substances and behaviours forbidden by Islamic law.

Figure 14. Example of a common *Tcharmila* display of *haram* substances (i.e. hashish) and status objects. Source: The online *Tcharmila* group page.

According to some reports in the media, the police initially tried to digitally alter the images found on Facebook, removing or obscuring the display of *haram* things. When this was derided in the press, the police tried to have the photos taken off Facebook. Eventually the raids proceeded to remove from the street young lower class men that matched the images. While in custody all the men were given 'disciplinary haircuts'. However, by considering all of these photographic poses to belong to and represent a unified youth movement, the authorities could unleash a sweeping operation, without having to deal with actual evidence gathering and due process.[151] In this sense, the medium used for the circulation of these images – the Internet – became crucial, as it effectively disembedded both subject and image from the socio-historical context of their production, allowing for the radical 'othering' of those identified as *mcharmlin*.

During this time, it was difficult to remain a detached observer of the on-going debates and criminalization of those associated with the *Tcharmila* phenomenon. On the one hand, someone from an upscale neighbourhood could have described many of the

[151] This again sparked several editorials questioning the methods through which the police had gained access to photos of young people purported to be part of the *Tcharmila* phenomenon, and the legitimacy of arbitrary arrests and detentions of underage minors. See *TelQue* archive for spring 2014: http://telquel.ma/tag/tcharmil.

teenage boys I knew from the *Arts de Rue* programme as *mcharmil*. They wore tracksuits when they came to breakdance practice, and were extremely proud of their Nike Air shoes, which were often bought second hand, or might in fact be bootlegged as they had bought them at the sprawling cheap 'Chinese' market nearby (see Chapter 3). On the other hand, several of my adult interlocutors in Hay Mohammadi believed that the periphery was indeed experiencing a growing delinquency problem and welcomed the police raids.

Ibrahim was one of my interlocutors who thought young men in the neighbourhood no longer understood what a sense of "responsibility" entailed. Having recently become a father to a baby boy at the time of my research, Ibrahim was relatively well off by local standards. In his early thirties and married to his high school sweetheart, also a local of Hay Mohammadi, during the previous ten years Ibrahim had worked hard alongside his studies and had managed to secure a job with the local branch of a multi-national computer technology company. Ibrahim's wife also worked full time, as support staff at the same company, and the couple entrusted their son to the care of Ibrahim's mother. Living with Ibrahim's mother allowed the young family to save money on both housing and childcare, in hopes of fulfilling their dream of social mobility and moving to a more upscale neighbourhood in the future. During several conversations over dinners cooked by his mother or during outings to the beach with his family, Ibrahim shared stories about his career path and life growing up in the neighbourhood, and he would frequently stress his conviction that it had been his moral character that had helped him along the way. "*Dima khedma*" (Ar. always at work, or always working) was how he described his recipe for success. Compared to his perceived self-discipline, Ibrahim saw the youths hanging out in his street and all over the neighbourhood as lacking in moral character, not necessarily in socio-economic opportunity. When the *Tcharmila* raids began Ibrahim thought they would instil some much needed discipline into local youths.

Other local men echoed this opinion. Asma's husband, Khalid, who had grown up in the neighbourhood himself, as well as several of Asma's older male siblings thought that the intensification of police activity would finally establish some order on the streets of the neighbourhood. Although very close in age to those who were being arrested, Samir, Asma's younger sibling chimed in to say that the situation had indeed reached a breaking point and that youth nowadays took too many liberties and deserved to have some limits enforced. Mr. Bakkar seemed to echo these views as well. As the benevolent patriarch figure behind a successful local association working with youth at risk, he

decried the harshness of the raids. At the same time he pointed out as we were walking along one of the largest thoroughfares in the area, that the neighbourhood had been allowed by the authorities to become a focal point of delinquency. In Mr. Bakkar's view this meant both the disinvestment in public infrastructures such as sport courts and parks, but also the lack of a firm police presence in one of the city's densest low-income areas. "Two policemen for 140 000 people; it's outrageous", he said as we turned the corner into the Derb Moulay Cheriff quarter.

Hamid and Youness, two of the older teenage boys who were the most skilled break-dancers in the group told me about how they had also been physically aggressed by thugs and hooligans, boys their age, when they had travelled to a smaller coastal town during a school holiday. However, when I asked about how they thought other people perceived them because of their dress style they told me they had never considered that anyone would find them threatening. "Of course we do stupid things sometime", Youness said, but he and Hamid claimed that they never stole or used violence against anyone. Having finished high school they were both training as baker's apprentices in a local pastry-shop, where they worked ten hour-shifts every day. In the evenings they would go home and spend a few hours practicing their breakdance moves on the flat rooftop of Hamid's house. After dinner, Hamid went on describing his own daily routine, he would spend some time studying, because one day he wanted to be able to go back to school and finish a university degree. Both boys thought the whole *Tcharmila* affair would fade away after a while, as just another fad.

Newspapers, weekly magazines, TV news and internet news sites maintained a regular cycle of reporting on both the arrests as well as their justification for almost two months. As I followed these stories I began to archive them, as a way of documenting "situated knowledge" (Haraway 1988), and its proliferation, both online as well as in discussions between inhabitants of Hay Mohammadi. The authors of some of the online articles also wondered whether this phenomenon was indeed all that new, and not just another passing trend. Indeed, several media commentators cautioned against reifying it as a "gang movement", when it appeared to be just a 'fad'.[152] An opinion piece in the respected French language weekly magazine *TelQuel* cautioned against the criminalization of an entire group of already disadvantaged young people, and after one young man who

[152] Public comments read and archived from the Facebook page of the "March against lack of safety" open group, on April 22, 2014. Retrieved from https://www.facebook.com/pages/Marche-Contre-Linsécurité-Ambiante-à-Casa/257714711069335?fref=ts

had been summarily detained during one of the police raids committed suicide while in custody, the president of the National Centre for the Study of Human Rights, pleaded for 'a more reasoned response' on the part of the authorities.[153] Other commentators in the press reminded the public that such arbitrary measures of enforcing public security were reminiscent of the dreaded, repressive 'Years of Lead', and should therefore be reconsidered. The arrests nevertheless, continued unabated, while the conversations I followed in the online discussion forums derided the idea of human rights violations and proposed retaliatory measures against anyone matching the *Tcharmil* description, arguing that those who took on the style should expect repercussions.[154]

It became evident that there was a limit to the human-rights discourse promoted by the state, and a widespread conviction among the upper class that certain members of society were not entitled to deploy this language. An oft-rehearsed refrain from such online discussion forums, which was echoed by some of my wealthier informants, claimed that the uneducated could not be granted rights before they knew how to also assume responsibilities, something these youth were evidently lacking. Several commentators suggested the youths should be sent to military camps where they could be properly disciplined. These comments saliently revealed the misalignment between the state's public commitment to international human rights discourses and the actual policing tactics it applied locally. As such, the authorities, aided by conservative public opinion in a city already mired in petty crime for decades, could scapegoat an entire demographic group without the burden of proof.

Hip-hop briefly entered the scene during this period through the report of the arrest of a group of young boys from Mohammadia, an industrial town to the north of Casablanca. The teenagers came from one of the city's poor *sha'abi* neighbourhoods, and had decided, according to the report, to record a rap song video in order to "raise awareness" about the non-criminal aspects of the *Tcharmila* phenomenon. The article titled "Fake *Tcharmil*, Real trial" claimed that, while they were attempting to videotape themselves, the teenagers were reported to the police by a bystander and were shortly thereafter arrested.[155] The author of the article hinted at the absurdity of this arrest, and asked if a certain boundary had not been crossed. Again, a small number of online commentators suggested that it would be useful to consider the socio-political root-causes

[153] Cited in the same *TelQuel* article. See http://telquel.ma/2014/04/25/tcharmil-rase-gratis_134250
[154] The comments posted on the Internet page were also cited in the previously mentioned *TelQuel* article.
[155] http://telquel.ma/2014/06/12/justice-faux-tcharmil-vrai-proces_138825 Accessed on April 9th, 2015.

of the emergence of this youth sub-culture, but other commentators dismissed their arguments as "*une foutaise*" (nonsense).[156]

The fervour with which this new trend was discussed both on and offline highlighted the struggle over the policing, definition and outward presentation of the 'proper young man'.[157] Crucially, the use of digital technology and new media had helped those who had never set foot in neighbourhoods like Hay Mohammadi to visualize the phenomenon, a fact that in some people's opinion only reinforced the mass hysteria. But in the same way that modernity required the production of the non-modern (cf. Mitchell 2002), the *Tcharmil* youth needed to be compared to its antinomy: the *Kilimini* child. Another popular-culture term that had been circulating for much longer than *Tcharmil*, the origins and precise etymology of *Kilimini* were also blurred. One of my long-time informants from Rabat told me that it was derived from the mispronunciation of the French " [*Qu'est-ce*] *qu'il est mignon*", meaning "isn't he sweet", an exclamation that many people associated with middle class children who behaved according to social norms. Other close interlocutors from Hay Mohammadi like Asma and her husband Khalid agreed on this etymology, Asma adding jokingly that Khalid had clearly been a *Kilimini* child. Khalid confessed that as a child growing up around Hay Mohammadi, the oldest son of a civil servant father and a stay at home mother, he had spent a fairly comfortable childhood reading French comic books rather than playing in the street. They both added that the stereotype of *Kilimini* children implied they went to bed early, never used swear words, spoke good French, and dressed in a clean, 'proper' fashion. Implied, but not stated, was the fact that in order to be a *Kilimini* child, one needed to be part of a middle class family with the financial means of providing such things as a good French education and clean, fashionable clothes.

Trying to bridge this constructed dichotomy, another online group named "*Anticharmil* or the incitation to reading"[158] tried to go beyond opposing a *Kilimini* stereotype in its response to the *Tcharmil* aesthetic. In reaction to the photos of sports shoes, gold watches and illegal substances, the *anticharmil* encouraged Moroccan youth to

[156] On the official Facebook page of the group "March against urban lack of safety" another commenter wrote: "One must stop finding excuses [for these acts] (the economy, politics, education, poverty). Citizenship is not only about rights, but also responsibilities." In the original French: "*Il faut arreté (sic) de trouver des excuses (l'économie, la politique, l'éducation, la pauvreté). La citoyenneté ne se résume pas à des droits, mais aussi à des devoirs."* Retrieved on April 22, 2014 from https://www.facebook.com/pages/Marche-Contre-Linsécurité-Ambiante-à-Casa/257714711069335?fref=ts

[157] Although some girls appeared in the photos linked to the *Tcharmil* phenomenon, they were considered as atypical, and seldom mentioned by commentators or regarded as a violent threat.

[158] The name of this initiative was also given in French: "*Anticharmil ou l'incitation à la lecture*".

post photos of their books, or themselves reading, a majority of the titles displayed being written in French. In an open letter, the creators of the group called for a halt to the criminalization of an entire class of young people who inhabited the city's destitute urban margins. The words of the open letter seemed to fall on deaf ears, however, and the solidarity march proposed under the banner "We are all Moroccan youth" never took place. What the media and public opinion remembered was the image of cosmopolitan, seemingly well behaved upper-middle class youth, and used that to contrast the images of presumably crass, tracksuit-wearing teenagers (Fig. 15). Ultimately, to borrow from Bourdieu, "all Moroccan youth" were not the same. And the differences that separated them had been reduced to an image.

The stereotypical treatment of that image as the marker of a particular class of youth pointed to the power of aesthetic difference in consolidating and widening an already existing class gap. As part of that constructed difference the valuing by the urban poor of material possessions and status objects such as watches, motorcycles or clothing was judged as signifying a lack of education. This perversely allowed those who already possessed those commodities to turn to books as a sign of distinction (Bourdieu 1987). As such, the performance and display of symbolic capital played a central role in the way the *Tcharmila* phenomenon was perceived, articulated and dealt with by the upper and middle classes of Casablanca.[159]

[159] An interesting comparison with this discussion can be found in Farha Ghannam's work in Cairo (2013), where she also analyses the role of clothing and display of the lower-class body in the production and the relation to accumulation of social capital.

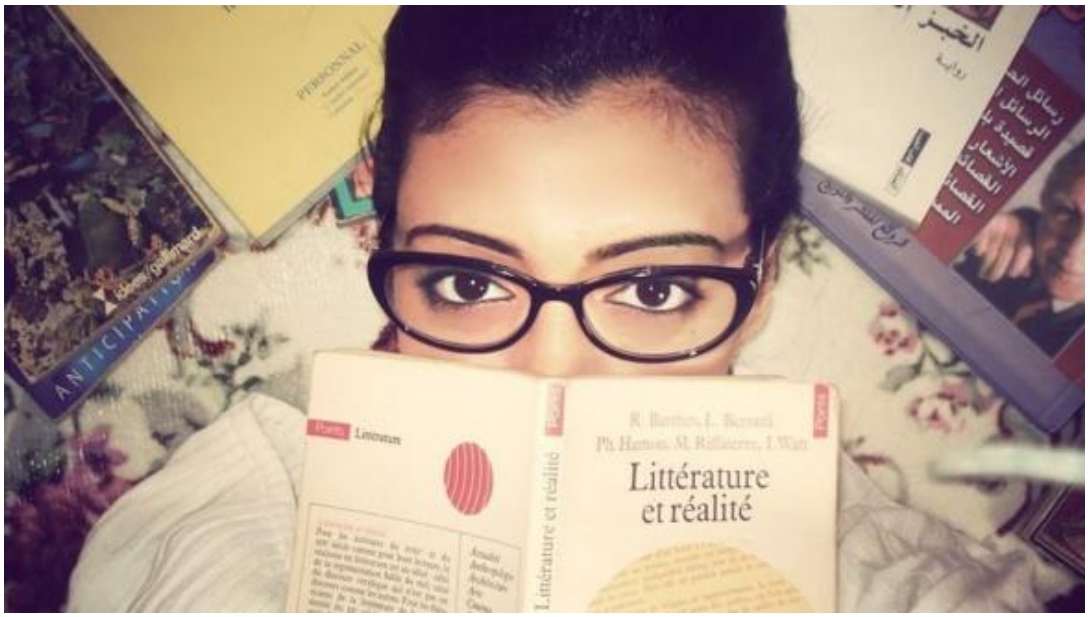

Figure 15. Image circulated with the "*Anti-tcharmila* or the incitation to reading" manifesto. Source: www.le360.ma

Despite the collective paranoia that was expressed in online forums, it soon became clear that *Tcharmila* was far from being an organized crime phenomenon. The minor drug dealers arrested and the small sums of money that were confiscated during the police raids indicated a fragmented scene typical of petty crime on the urban fringe. Not quite a subculture, and certainly not an organized movement, the young *mcharmlin* boys of Casablanca's margins were threatening to the social order not because they had engaged in a direct form of collective protest, but for what Bayat calls "collective presence" (2010: 111). Similar to what I have discussed in Chapter 3 with regards to the production of place-based masculinities, the visible (albeit mostly virtual) presence of dispersed, atomized individuals became more destabilizing to the hegemonic social order than the actions of an organized youth movement. Nevertheless, in the case of the *Tcharmila* events, the young men proved to be over-powered by dominant discourses and the ability of the state to police the public realm.[160] For many of my interlocutors in Hay Mohammadi and at the *jam'iyya,* this meant that eventually the young men should try to conform to the hegemonic image of the 'proper young man'.

Both during the *Tcharmila* raids and in their aftermath, at the *jam'iyya* the instructors and coordinators of the *Arts de Rue* programme advised the youth to avoid

[160] As many of my interlocutors in Hay Mohammadi pointed out, however, the state selectively used its power to police public space. Many inhabitants complained that these "security actions" were erratic and came in spurts, and only when the King or someone close to the monarchy could be persuaded to intercede and compel the local authorities to intervene.

associating with any criminal activities or those who took part in them. Citing the need to think of the future, the association directed its youth towards another of its EU-funded programmes, which aimed at facilitating their integration into the local job market. The project focused on helping high school graduates prepare their resumes and apply for jobs. The definition of its target user was "youth in difficulty". On one occasion I pointed out to the *jam'iyya 's* president, Mr. Bakkar, that youth in difficulty, in my understanding, would be those who had not managed to finish high school, and therefore, had even less of a chance of finding a job in Morocco's incredibly competitive and shrinking job market. Admitting to the truth of my assessment, he was forced to point out that the definitions and guidelines of their foreign funders determined their target group.

As part of this programme, the *jam'iyya* was working with the National Agency for Promotion of Employment and Skills (ANAPEC) that had been created by the state in 2000. The coordination, however, was less than perfect, and staff at the *jam'iyya* complained to me that they often felt like their tasks were reduced to printing the job ads advertised by the ANAPEC. The jobs offered through the ANAPEC, as well as some of the employers the *jam'iyya* tried to enlist in its efforts, were either unpaid traineeships or low-skilled positions, on precarious temporary contracts, often requiring the potential employees to undertake a long commute across Casablanca's urban sprawl. A cursory survey of these job listings showed that they provided less than minimum wage, which in 2014 was 2,571 dirhams per month (approximately £175). For that reason many of the young people who came to use the job counselling service at the *jam'iyya* eventually refused to take up the jobs offered. One youth, Karim, who came by regularly, was aspiring to find a temporary or part-time job with a foreign fast-food company while continuing his studies for a Master degree. The staff considered his ambitions unrealistic and advised him to either study or work. Furthermore, similar to what Mains' (2011) argues about young unemployed men in Ethiopia, Moroccan youth on the margins of Casablanca also saw these jobs as stigmatizing based on their association with low status in the community. Aspirations for better paying or more socially prestigious jobs were either met with scepticism or derided by the programme's staff.

Another member of the *jam'iyya* staff in her mid-thirties told me that youth in the neighbourhood expected to "get everything on a platter", whereas she had worked hard and hadn't shied away from strenuous jobs when she was younger. For many of the job seekers, like Karim, this effectively constituted a second form of stigmatizing for not

accepting what was touted as an "opportunity" out of poverty. If the language of rights was benign enough to be encouraged in youth engaged in Street Arts, it was not available to those who defied the state-approved image of propriety or those who demanded more secure job opportunities. In the latter case, a discourse centred on duties and responsibilities, echoing that of online commentators during the *Tcharmila* episode, criminalized dissent as the language and behaviour of lazy, unworthy people.

At the *jam'iyya* there was little room for discussions about the politics behind social-development initiatives, and Mr. Bakkar often emphasized in our discussions that he did his utmost to ensure that the association had a reputation for being apolitical. "I am not interested in politics", he often told me. "We are a social development association, a neighbourhood organization, not like those big, famous NGOs on the national scene." He often suggested that such NGOs had become politicized once they reached a certain level of notoriety, and that he would try to prevent that from happening to the *jam'iyya*. And in fact, neither Mr. Bakkar nor the other members referred to their community organization as an NGO per se. They were more inclined to employ the French term *association*, or the abbreviated *asso'*. However, the staff also acknowledged that the *jam'iyya* was indeed constrained to operate both structurally, as well as through its choice of programmes, as a non-governmental organization if it hoped to receive any funding.

While there is no law prohibiting the involvement of NGO actors in Moroccan politics (Berriane 2010: 98), Mr. Bakkar's statement is telling for the way it both acknowledges that such politicization was detrimental in certain circumstances, while engaging in a fiction where social issues could be decoupled from political decisions and historical circumstances. By addressing problems as 'social' and apolitical, the responsibility for their causes and solutions was necessarily reverted onto the community and the individual. This allowed the state to act as a benevolent financial supporter of already approved development initiatives, while at the same time occluding its role in creating or contributing to socio-economic problems such as unemployment, educational failure and urban degradation.

Conclusion

In his poignant analysis of the politics of NGOs in the Middle East, Bayat argues that due to the trajectory of international development agendas, local organizations focused on rights and accountability have had a much better chance of securing a seat at the funding

table, compared to advocacy centred around wealth and income gaps (2013: 110). However, premised on the politics of fragmentation, the proliferation of the NGO model in recent decades has managed to divide potential beneficiaries into small groups whose struggles are constructed as divergent and sometimes competing for limited resources. Salwa Ismail estimates that in recent years the effect of neoliberal ideas on the state has led to the relocation of public welfare to the private sector via the 'development work' of NGOs, which has created a dynamic increasingly reliant on a model inspired by "western philanthropic traditions" (2006: 67).

The *jam'iyya* 's development of their youth programmes can be situated within a period that has been described by scholars like Mike Davis as the "NGO-isation of impoverished urban communities". In Davis' view, this has led to the standardisation and "bureaucratisation" of struggles over social and economic issues as they were progressively neutralized by a rights-based discourse and brought into the main stream (2007: 77-82). In this chapter, I have described how the same process was taking place in Morocco, where it affected independent musical production of hip-hop artists as well as the work of the *jam'iyya* in the realm of youth activities. This has led me to argue, in line with what the literature in the anthropology of development has been documenting for decades, that the retrenchment of the state that began in the 1980s in Morocco, in combination with the emergence of a rights-based development discourse in the late 1990s, has slowly led to the depoliticization of cultural forms of contestation, and to the masking of the root causes of poverty and social exclusion on the urban margins. As the ethnographic material presented here demonstrates, this depoliticization has contributed to arguments about the moral value of street space in places like Hay Mohammadi. These moral undertones were replicated in turn by those working with youth at the *jam'iyya*, and could be seen most clearly in the manner in which the use of space and the presence of young bodies were policed. AS such the space of the *jam'iyya* and its programs became associated with moralizing programs about the proper place and behaviour for lower-class youth.

In this chapter I have also argued that in the case of Morocco, the proliferation of social development initiatives and interventions based on the NGO model has also masked the re-emergence of the state's presence on the urban margins through both funding as well as endorsing a particular type of development approach. Using the example of the *jam'iyya*, I have argued that the state selectively promoted aesthetically and commercially

appealing aspects of urban marginality while criminalizing within a moral as well as political discourse the locally produced image and life of marginalized youth. Aided by the work of local NGOs, dominant discourses thus tried to co-opt youth into a framework that stressed neoliberal forms of productivity and conformity to certain norms and forms of identity.

The scale and violence of the *Tcharmila* episode revealed both the political and the affective power of images to 'disturb' and to 'move' in the transitive sense (Steedly and Spyer 2013: 8). The medium and context for the circulation and consumption of these images – the Internet – is also significant. The role of the Internet (and social networking sites in particular) in the Arab Spring protests showcased the medium's potential as a new public (cyber) space for popular and political mobilisation (cf. Farrell 2012). The *Tcharmila* episode, however, demonstrates that the same space can serve to polarize public opinion by appealing to criminalizing tropes that dehumanized and rendered as radically 'other' the young men of the impoverished urban fringe.

Another important aspect relates to the 'work done' by these images. On the one hand, their capacity to make visible an entire class of marginalized youth speaks to the power of visual materials to make known aspects of everyday life that might otherwise be willingly or tacitly occluded and obscured from mainstream channels. They re-enforce Bayat's claim about the potency of "collective presence", as they demand of both state and elites to reckon with the everyday hardship and desires of disenfranchised youths. On the other hand, the manipulation of this broadly defined 'corpus' of images by the Moroccan police as a way of criminalizing and eventually physically and symbolically disciplining the lower-class male body, complicates discussions of how images and their circulation might be productively used to further a politics of recognition inflected by class identities (cf. Habermas 1993).

Moreover, while preceding chapters have touched on how representations of space participated in the production of stigmatisation, the material in this chapter saliently illuminated the violent potential of aesthetic difference in ordering not only space but also bodies. The staging of lower-class symbolic capital as a still-life tableau that blended elements of a hip-hop aesthetic (money, drugs, watches) with the textures of Moroccan working-class domestic settings (notice the ornate couch pillows in Fig. 14) further highlights the complicated entanglement of local material worlds with the globalisation of desires. It underscores the difficult struggles of securing material wealth and social

prestige for a segment of the Moroccan population that has borne the brunt of historical and socio-economic upheavals in recent decades. Significantly, this staging places the desires and dreams of marginalized young men at the center of the collective gaze and demands that they be seen.

In the next chapter, I continue the examination of how these spatial representations and material practices acted as a nexus between local agency and state policies. I will shift my focus, however, to the domestic sphere where I explore the skilled forms of 'mundane' practices developed by my closest female informants as part of their efforts to secure both present as well as future livelihoods.

Chapter 5 | 'Dwelling on the margins': skilful routines, care giving and the '*un*homely'

In the spring of 2014, a much advertised cultural project opened for the duration of one month in the space of the *Anciens Abattoirs* in Hay Mohammadi, once again bringing together heritage and NGO actors and the neighbourhood's inhabitants. With the assistance of the French Cultural Institute in Casablanca, the well-known French director and producer Michel Gondry was to set up a "film factory" (*usine de films*), where groups of amateurs would be offered the chance to write, direct, act and record their own film creations. To this end, inside the *Abattoirs* several sets had been built to provide the attendants with backdrops for their filmmaking. Each space had been built after careful study and consultation with theatre and film professionals from Morocco, as a way of achieving "as authentic a cultural effect as possible", in the words of one of the project organizers. What became evident as I repeatedly visited the space with several groups of young people from the *jam'iyya*, and occasionally accompanied by some of my close female informants, was the different reactions people had to one of the sets in particular – namely, the 'Moroccan home' set. Amina, my closest friend and research interlocutor during fieldwork, also accompanied me on a visit of the set. Like most of my female informants in Hay Mohammadi, she came from a working-class background, having spent her entire life in the neighbourhood, and, as this chapter will discuss, Amina closely associated a sense of well-being with a carefully kept domestic space.

Composed of two adjacent 'rooms', the set was meant to re-create a typical kitchen and salon (living room) area, complete with *tagine* dishes and floral sofa cushions. Amina was immediately taken with the décor, and proceeded to inspect and admire every piece of furniture and fixture displayed, while comparing it to her current dwelling at the time. "It is very nice! They did a very good job", she concluded. Moments later, several young women dressed in a manner that signalled their upper-class background, and speaking in a mixture of French and darija, came on to the set giggling and commenting to one another: "Can you believe how *kitsch* it all is? *Grave, quoi!* (Seriously)." The fact that the set's aesthetic features appealed to Amina while at the same time signalled low-brow culture to the two young women is indicative of the ways in which the Moroccan home as social, cultural and political project has been transformed in recent decades.

While the previous chapters have focused on the production and contestation of marginality and *sha'abi* identity in the spaces opened up by the street and the third sector, this chapter will consider the role of the domestic arena in the transformations affecting the inhabitants of Hay Mohammadi. As such, this chapter also picks up the thread on liminal and threshold spaces from Chapter 3 as a way of advancing the discussion of the role of domesticity and its connection to public space. Drawing on Yael Navaro-Yashin's study of the affective and legal-political dimensions of Turkish-Cypriot domestic material culture (2012), this chapter and the following one will explore the experience of inhabiting the domestic spaces on the margins of Casablanca as an embodied as well as politically constituted set of practices performed by my informants. While the next chapter will consider in greater detail the political and future-oriented dimensions of what I refer to as 'dwelling on the margins', this chapter will focus on the skilled and affective aspects of home-making in the economically and socially precarious context of Hay Mohammadi.

The Moroccan home as cultural institution

Perusing Lisa Lovatt-Smith's beautifully illustrated book *Moroccan Interiors*, one of many recent rich folios trying to convey the fascination of the "Moroccan way of life" to Western audiences, the reader is informed that there are three types of dwellings in Morocco: the Berber tent, the earthen architecture of the Atlas Mountains, and urban homes (1995: 15). This categorisation, however, masks a great variety of arrangements that could be considered homes, while additionally begging the question: Is there such a thing as a quintessential Moroccan home? Would that be a palatial *riad*[161] of the kind that tempts tourists with promises of hidden urban oases in Marrakech's old town? Or is captured in the digital renderings advertising *moyen standing*[162] apartments in the newly built suburban cities flanking Casablanca and Rabat? Can dwellings in *bidonvilles* be Moroccan homes?

In the 1940s when the French Protectorate began to develop a plan for housing working-class Moroccans, it approached the task with a seriousness reserved for military campaigns. As I discussed in Chapter 1, Michel Écochard, in his role as head of the Urban Planning division starting in 1944, was driven by a humanist form of paternalism to provide Moroccans with affordable modern housing. As part of this plan, he

[161] See the Glossary for an explanation of alternative spellings.
[162] This designates a mid-level comfort apartment in Morocco. Other categories include: 'economy' and 'haut standing'.

commissioned a scientific team. An *atelier ambulant* (mobile unit) composed of an engineer, a topographer, an urban designer and two draughtsmen conducted interviews and surveyed the needs of the "new proletariat" living in "indigenous settlements" (Celik 2005: 277). Using methods inspired by the long tradition of ethnological research in the French colonies,[163] the young architects working under Écochard studied not only built forms but also the organization of everyday life in the *bidonvilles* surrounding Casablanca (Avermaete 2010b). Their detailed study of 'dwelling culture' in the *bidonvilles* of *Carrière Centrale* was perhaps the last time researchers took an interest in Moroccan working-class domesticity. In fact, the Moroccan home has seldom received scholarly attention, and available publications tend to portray it in terms that evoke the Orientalist essentialism found in the treatment of the so-called 'Islamic city'. Marked by a preoccupation with traditionalist aesthetics, the Moroccan home has become an increasingly reified concept, as illustrated by a growing number of high-quality, glossy publications, similar to the one mentioned earlier. Invariably titled "Moroccan Styles" or "Living in Morocco," these folio-sized books are targeted at either a Western, affluent population of "home design enthusiasts," as one such book recommends itself, or to a small niche of wealthy Moroccans (cf. Bonfante-Warren 2000, Dennis 2001, Stoeltie 2003, Verner 2005, Ypma 2010). Furthermore, these publications occlude the historical and political dimensions of housing in Morocco, with the result of producing an Orientalist and static image of domesticity.

Part of what Chris Cullens (1999) refers to as the "fetishization of the domestic realm", such publications thrive on a pervasive fascination with romantic visions of a essentialized Middle East. While the books sometimes feature inhabited homes, their owners are seldom present in the photographs, though always referred to as urban, cosmopolitan elites of European origin, or "expatriate aesthetes in the grand tradition of the American millionaire Barbara Hutton" (Lovatt-Smith 1995: 14, 38). Adding a different angle to this genre of publications are the increasingly popular first-person narratives of Westerners turned homebuyers and 'refurbishers' of Morocco's "crumbling heritage" (Shah 2006, Clarke 2007, McGuinness and Mouhli 2012). This selective preoccupation with traditionalist and Orientalist themes in publications has meant the complete neglect of urban working-class homes and the lives and social networks they engender and sustain.

[163] See Robert Montagne (1952) and André Adam (1968).

While it is true that francophone scholarly literature has continued its historical engagement with urban themes in the Maghreb region, this has been done predominantly from a sociological or a political science perspective, which often lack the insights of ethnographic work (cf. Pinson 1992, 1994). An exception to this trend is of course the work of Pierre Bourdieu. To this day, Bourdieu's now famous study of the Kabyle house remains one of the most influential and oft-cited engagements with the symbolic meaning of domestic architecture in North Africa (1979). Based on a highly structural analysis, Bourdieu argued that the Kabyle house is essentially a synecdoche for larger Kabyle society, constructed around various sets of oppositions such as male/female, high/low, public/private, inside/outside, east/west (1979: 140). Anthropologists and sociologists have continued to converse with this study as well as its later development by Bourdieu in works such as *Outline of a Theory of Practice* (1977) and *Distinction* (1987). However, there has been a dearth of responses to Bourdieu's house model from anthropologists of North Africa. Paul Silverstein's critique (2004), alongside those of Jane Goodman (2009) and Abdellah Hammoudi (2007), engaged in ethnographically and historically informed conversations with Bourdieu's Kabyle work, albeit from a Kabyle standpoint. Gabriele vom Bruck's re-reading of the Berber house through the prism of residential space in a Yemenite city remains an isolated example of an ethnographic comparison. Her nuanced analysis challenged the ready applicability of Bourdieu's concepts in other Middle Eastern settings by showing how cultural meanings attached to space are highly contextual and fluid, as space only "comes into being through practice" (1997: 166).

As preceding chapters have shown, recent heritage-making practices in Casablanca have failed to properly engage with the inhabitants of the built heritage they are working to preserve, and at times have vilified the residents' dwelling practices (see Chapter 1). Unfortunately, few scholars have explored the spatial and material aspects of dwelling in a Moroccan context, and even fewer have done so from the perspective of the inhabitants themselves. It is therefore important here to distinguish between preoccupations with the architectural forms, and a fascination and subsequent Orientalist fetishization of intimate, domestic realms in the Maghreb. The latter has indeed been widely explored in what has come to be known as "harem literature". In a recent collection of essays gathered by Marylin Booth (2010), this phenomenon is critically engaged with through a series of historically and geographically specific examples of the multifaceted manifestations and meanings of the *harem.* Through the work of its contributors, the collection problematizes

sensationalist Orientalist depictions of domesticity in the Middle East and North Africa and rightly highlights the more mundane and "socially variable phenomena" that the term *harem* can encompass (Booth 2010: 5).

Derived from the Arabic root *h-r-m*, the term is meant to convey notions of prohibition and sacredness, but also the space associated with things that are revered and protected, such as the domain of the home and the family (Schick 2010: 69). Similarly, the late Moroccan scholar and activist Fatima Mernissi distinguishes between the harem of her childhood home, where all female relatives shared their time and living space, and that of Western invention which relied on eroticized images of submissive women to convey its fascination (1994, 2001). Through autobiographical examples, Mernissi paints a picture of the "household harem" of a monogamous, multigenerational, relatively well-off family living in an old house in Fez on the cusp of Moroccan Independence, dealing with the challenges posed by a society under transformation (2001). As such, Mernissi's account can be considered one of few ethnographic explorations of the crucial role played by the home and the domestic realm in the wider social world of contemporary Morocco.

The paucity of anthropological work on home spaces in North Africa mirrors the wider neglect of the house in the discipline's literature. Marginal at best, but mostly taken for granted as the familiar backdrop to more meaningful processes and structures, it was not until the 1960s and 1970s that the house gained theoretical validity. This was owed in part to the revisiting of kinship studies as well as economic anthropology's interest in the home as a unit of production and consumption (Singerman and Hoodfar 1996). However, it was not until the 1980s that anthropologists finally approached the material, spatial, and temporal dimensions of homes as part of a holistic analytical method. Propelled by studies undertaken in Southeast Asia and South America (see Whorf 1956, Waterson 1990, Lea 1992, Hugh-Jones 1993), the house in Mediterranean and European settings is slowly recognized as a valid analytical category.

Drawing on this significant body of recent work in the anthropology of the home (Carsten and Hugh-Jones 1996, Singerman 1996, Birdwell-Pheasant and Lawrence-Züniga 1999, Buchli 1999, Miller 2001, Cieraad 2006, Daniels 2010), in this chapter I engage in an exploration of domestic realms in a way that disrupts static understandings of "home". In what follows, I consider homes as processes of emplacement as well as displacement, as material, spatial, temporal and affective states, wherein gender, class, and moral norms intersect in complex ways. Following Mary Douglas, I treat the home as a

"localizable idea" (1991: 289) rather than a bounded space, while at the same time documenting the significance of the material objects and culture associated with this "idea". Grounding my analysis in the ethnographic material gathered with and alongside my closest informant, Amina, I present an in-depth exploration of what dwelling on the margins of Casablanca entails for one household struggling with precarity. At the same time, I provide several other comparative examples of local women whose particular positions in the neighbourhood's socio-economic landscape demonstrate the fluid and diverse roles home-making practices played in everyday lives. As part of this analysis the link between the body and the home emerges as a crucial one, something I explore in the chapter through the prism of trauma, as well as the embodied performance of skilled home-making.

I begin by engaging with an investigation of the potential un-homely nature of domestic realms in a precarious context. I then go on to explore the role of skill in processes and performances of home-making and home-keeping, and argue that by addressing routines alongside the concept of rituals we can better understand how a sense of well-being was achieved (or not) by my informants living on the margins of Casablanca. The role of home-making practices in the re-production of social norms and distinctions runs through this chapter as a theme and comes to light in several ways. The final section of this chapter, however, expressly addresses this by looking at how these distinctions became acutely evident for my informants in Hay Mohammadi in the time-space of the holy month of Ramadan.

Domesticity as '*un*homely'

One day in February 2013, early in my fieldwork, Amina invited me to have lunch at her house. Heading off one of the main streets in Hay Mohammadi into a narrower cobblestoned pedestrian alley, we passed through the arched gates of the workers' estate I had first encountered through the heritage association's tours (see Chapter 1). Whitewashed walls and decorative details evoking traditional Moroccan architecture accompanied us for a short while. Stepping out through another arched gate we arrived at Amina's *derb*, or quarter. The houses there were more densely built, taller and closer together, but still part of a unified aesthetic in their various shades of terracotta. The storeys appeared to be precariously stacked, one above the other, their façade details resembling slices of a layer cake askew. Several houses had bricked in windows, and an

overall look of decrepitude. Leaking from a wall, a muddy stream of water smelled strongly of human waste. Nearby the grime and oil of a mechanic's shop had coloured the sidewalk a dark stain. Amina's small alleyway was littered with food wrappers and organic waste, trash gathering in clumps around sewer openings. Children ran up and down playing catch, oblivious to the large dead rat in the middle of the street.

Amina's house was identical to the ones lining the street on both sides. The entrance door was ajar and I could see a tiled, dark and narrow staircase ascending to the upper floors. Amina lived on the ground floor, her door a few paces behind the main entrance to the building. Stepping inside we were greeted by darkness until she turned on a naked bulb hanging from the high ceiling. With the exception of an air vent above the entrance door, there were no windows, since this part of the building had originally been an open patio that was now closed-in in order to build further floors. Originally one of the many 8x8 houses designed by Écochard, Amina's ground floor dwelling had become the opposite of aerated and sunny. The ceiling had not been properly sealed off from the apartment upstairs and Amina remarked that her ventilation system took in the cigarette smoke from her neighbours.

Amina lived there with her younger sister, who suffered from a severe developmental disability, making her completely dependent on Amina. I was invited to sit down in the small salon as Amina began to prepare lunch. The glare of the single fluorescent bulb reflected the blue tinge of the tiled walls, giving the space a rather bleak air. The 64 square meters that made up the home were divided disproportionately between the kitchen, the foyer and two small rooms. The foyer took up the most space in the centre of the house, while all the other rooms lined its sides and opened onto it. A minuscule washroom had been squeezed under the staircase that led to the upper floor apartments. Separated from the foyer by a wooden door on a latch, the limited space served as both squat toilet and shower room. Amina embarrassedly asked me to ignore the smell that came from that direction, telling me that plumbing was as old as the quarter and in need of repair. To the other side of the entrance door the kitchen was not much larger than the washroom, its space easily filled by one person alone. In fact, aside from a few dishware items, a small sink and a two-burner stove, the kitchen could hold little else. As a consequence Amina had placed the refrigerator in the foyer, along with the laundry machine and a plastic cupboard.

The salon was long and narrow, connected to the foyer by an opening framed by a gauzy silver and white curtain, with a window on each side. Lining each wall were low, rectangular sofa cushions covered in a velvety, floral-patterned blue fabric whose silvery details matched the curtain. This was the only room in the house that was carpeted, so I slipped my shoes off before stepping in and taking a seat. A low wooden table sporting small wheels on each leg for easier manoeuvring stood in the middle of the room. The TV had been mounted on a high wooden shelf nailed into one corner, which freed up the space, but also mirrored the ubiquitous display of TVs in cafés. Amina had it switched to a Turkish soap opera that she liked to watch while eating. Bringing out a bag full of the medication that she usually took with her lunch, she told me she also suffered from an autoimmune disease, whose onset she traced back to the death of her mother from cancer a few years ago. Although she was not sure what type of cancer her mother had, Amina vaguely suspected a link to her mother's job in the nearby sardine-packing factory. Her father's death, also from cancer, took place some years before her mother's. An older half-sister had emigrated abroad but Amina did not feel that she could rely on her for any form of support.

Over the course of my fieldwork I became very close to Amina, staying over nights at her invitation, visiting often, celebrating religious feasts together, and occasionally going on outings in the city. It became clear to me over time that while her situation was uncommon, it was not all that dissimilar from those of other residents sharing her socio-economic background in Hay Mohammadi. Although it is not uncommon for young women from wealthy families to live independently in a city like Casablanca, at the time of my fieldwork it was remarkable that as an unmarried, orphaned young woman in Hay Mohammadi, Amina would live by herself.

> "Right after my mother died, some relatives said I should go live with my aunt. But I did not want to. They said I could go live with them, but I didn't want to bother them. My cousin then told me, 'You can live on your own. You are old enough and responsible, you can take care of yourself'. And I think this is the best thing for me. I don't have to answer to anyone like this."

Of course this was not entirely true, as Amina did not only have to care for herself, but also for her sister, and often talked about the pressure of living under the perceived daily surveillance of her neighbours. Living on her own also meant that when her landlord tried

to increase her rent after the death of her mother, Amina had very little family support to fight the decision.

> "I was very young, twenty years old. And the *mul dar* (owner of the house) came to say he was going to increase the rent. I had to fight hard to convince him not to do it. I went to the *medina* where he lives in a big house, and asked him not to do it. I brought *al-weraq* (the documents) my mother left me. He was going to triple the rent! It used to be that his mother was our landlady in fact, and now her son wanted to increase all rents. I ended up going to the *muqata'a* (public notary) and getting my documents legalised. It was a lot of work but in the end I succeeded."

In spite of the challenges she encountered when she found herself alone, Amina told me the story of her troubles not without a sense of pride and empowerment that she clearly derived from her victory over the landlord. The ability to deal with such contingencies as well as the effects they had on Amina were closely associated with ideas and perceptions of her own physical and mental well-being. While clearly proud of the way she had handled the situation with her landlord, Amina insisted that the sense of material insecurity that her housing situation created took a toll on her health. Unlike the inhabitants of an adjacent quarter, who suffered from illnesses directly related to the sugar refinery that coated their living quarters in a thin layer of sweet, asthma-inducing dust, Amina's ill health, and that of her sister, were more tenuously linked to the material degradation of the area. After completing her story of the rent-increase dispute, I asked Amina if she had fought so hard because she liked living there. Her answer was negative. "It is a bad (*khayb*) and dangerous area, poor, ugly (*mazwinch*) and dirty; but we make do," she concluded in French (*Mais, on fait avec)*.

The sense of unrelenting surveillance, the responsibility to care for her sister, and her own chronic illness were intimately, but also ambiguously linked in Amina's mind to her place of dwelling. As her childhood home, the house remained a meaningful place for Amina, invested with happy memories of past times. But homes are not constant felicitous places, and the work of feminist scholarship has contributed greatly to rethinking previous work on domesticity (cf. Bachelard 1994[1964], Massey 1994, Shove 2003, Blunt and Dowling 2006, Hollows 2008). As Amina traced the onset of her illness to the death of her mother, the house and her body became linked by the experience of trauma and loss. A recurring anecdote Amina was fond of telling revealed the way in which the corporeal senses became linked to this experience of home undergoing a profound transformation:

"When my mother was in the hospital before she died, my cousin came to cook for us, and she prepared a *tagine* (stew), but put bay leaves in it. We hated it! My mother never cooked with bay leaves. To this day I can't eat them." The bitter taste of bay leaf connected Amina to the loss of her mother's care and home-cooked meals. This loss seemed to amplify those material elements of the home whose 'unhomeliness' had maybe been ignored until that point. In our conversations Amina repeatedly mentioned how after the death of her mother the home was no longer welcoming: "We have no windows, the sun never comes in here", she seemed to notice almost with surprise. A place where textures were familiar and whose organization and display were creatively engaged with, as I further discuss in the following chapter, this home was also the decaying, "*khayb*" (bad) architecture that housed her sister who waited everyday day for Amina to come home from work. Adding to this was a growing communal awareness of the history of state violence that had left its marks on Amina's quarter, most notably in the continued presence of the underground detention centre. Occasionally, sitting in her salon having a meal or chatting, Amina would hint at this in such remarks as: "Sometimes I get the chills at night, thinking of all those torture cells under our feet", or "Who knows how many torture cells they have down there?" Nevertheless, there were times when Amina preferred to spend the weekend inside her home, and I often failed to coax her to join me for a sunny walk outside, as she argued that she would much rather enjoy the cosiness of her home, stressing that this made her feel *hanya* (relaxed, at ease).

As I poured over my fieldnotes and attempted to understand the ambivalent feelings Amina expressed about her domestic situation, I came upon Freud's elaboration of the *uncanny* in an essay he published in 1919. Starting from an earlier analysis provided by Ernst Jentsch (1906), and based on literary as well as psychoanalytical case material, Freud proposes to explore the nature of the *unheimlich* as a psychic state that may give rise to feelings of fear, dread or eeriness. Although *uncanny* seems to be the preferred English term, Freud also noted that a closer etymological translation would be "un-homely" (1919: 124). Drawing on the definitions offered by a German dictionary from 1860, Freud identified the un-homely as the antonym of *heimlich,* which he defined at length as: "belonging to the house, not strange, familiar, tame, dear and intimate, homely, etc. […] belonging to the family […] intimate, cosily homely; arousing a pleasant feeling of quiet contentment, etc., of comfortable repose and secure protection, like the enclosed, comfortable house […] cosy intimacy […] I shall probably feel nowhere more at home

than here" (Freud 1919: 127-28). Looking for a definition of *unheimlich* Freud discovered terms such as being ''uncomfortable, uneasy, gloomy, dismal, uncanny, ghastly, (of a house): haunted, (of a person): a repulsive fellow" (1919: 125). Unsatisfied with what he saw as an "incomplete" definition and drawing on Jentsch's formulation of the uncanny, Freud pressed on to discover that the *uncanny* is not merely that which is unfamiliar and ghostly, but also something that once belonged to the familiar and protected nature of the home but has been rendered alienating and frightful. Furthermore, the word *heimlich* is "not unambiguous" (ibid.), carrying different shades of meaning that sometimes bring it closer to its opposite. This second meaning of the word, which associates *heimlich* with something that is furtive, concealed, or "lurking" has become dominant in recent use.[164] Freud thus concluded, "*heimlich* becomes increasingly ambivalent, until it finally merges with its antonym *unheimlich*. The uncanny (*das Unheimliche*, 'the unhomely') is in some way a species of the familiar (*das Heimliche*, 'the homely')." This nuanced meaning also resonates with the definition of the *harem* – something that must be kept hidden and secret. As Navaro-Yashin observed in her study of domestic appropriations in Northern Cyprus (2012: 182), thus defined, the 'un-homely' can therefore serve as a powerful analytical category for exploring the ambivalent affect evoked by particular dwelling contexts charged with a history of state violence and personal trauma.

In Homi Bhabha's (1992) estimation the un-homely is a paradigmatic post-colonial experience. According to his reading, the un-homely has a definitive spatio-temporal dimension present in the historical moment marked by the intrusion of the world into the home, and the inversion of the physical space of the home from a reassuringly intimate place of shelter and resting into a realm that is marked by contingency and displacement. Anthony Vidler (1992) further emphasizes the spatial dimension to Freud's conception of the un-homely by also going back to the original formulation of the notion in Jentsch's work. Jentsch defined the *unheimlich* as a "lack of orientation" in a previously familiar situation, a sense of being invaded by something hostile and foreign in a previously comfortable setting. For Amina this intrusion seemed to be constituted by the emotional and financial insecurity opened up by her mother's death, coupled with the discovery of the physical spaces of historical trauma that lay beneath her feet. Where the familiarity of her childhood home once stood unchallenged, there was now a constant tension with the material and affective aspects of her dwelling that had taken on a 'gloomy' tint after her

[164] "Heimlich", in: Duden − Das große Wörterbuch der deutschen Sprache, 4. Auflage, CD-ROM, Bibliographisches Institut GmbH, Berlin, 2012.

mother's death. Adding to this growing perception of un-homeliness were the compounded financial, emotional and moral burdens placed on Amina during the years following her loss. With no kin to provide her or her sister with financial support, Amina held on to a job that brought her little satisfaction and forced her to constantly devise personal strategies for surviving on a limited income, something I will return to in the next section. Although she had received the encouragement of her female cousins in deciding to live without a male chaperone, Amina was also keenly aware of the moral and social pressure and surveillance placed on her by her neighbours, as I already mentioned.

However, as Navaro-Yashin (2012) and Veena Das (2008) both contend, beyond the direct impact and influence of historical and political forces, what if rather than being a counterpoint to a bourgeois notion of homely cosiness, we acknowledged the un-homely as a central feature of domesticity? And indeed, while Amina was aware of and sometimes complained about the un-homely aspects of her domestic situation, she had also managed to develop a set of practices that allowed her to keep the un-homely in check, as I shall discuss. Nevertheless, the material, moral and affective burdens and challenges placed on Amina impacted not only her ability to care for herself and her sister but also affected the way she perceived offers of help from her community. Specifically, in dealing with such daily chores and duties as caring for her disabled sister, cleaning, cooking, or simply maintaining her own emotional and psychological well being, Amina drew on her local social networks of friends, neighbours and distant cousins.

As already mentioned, the loss of her parents and the estrangement of her older sister meant that Amina had to develop alternative support networks. Both at work and in the neighbourhood, her friendships to a large extent came to supplement traditional ties of kinship. Unlike familial relationships, she would sometimes stress, Amina felt that her friendships provided her with a more honest form of support because they were not defined by the social codes of kin reciprocity, but rather by mutual sympathy and shared life views. These relationships, however, were also characterised by their externality to the home and overwhelmingly defined by their affective weight, which meant that Amina's friendships were often of a volatile or unstable nature. As had been the case in her friendship with Asma (see Introduction), during my time in Hay Mohammadi, Amina's ties with several friends became strained because of various perceived offenses or emotional injuries.

These incidents concluded with the breaking off of said friendships, and Amina's resolute conclusion that she could only count on herself in the end. Similar to what Clara Han discusses in her ethnography of poverty and debt in La Pincoya (2012), Amina further distinguished between her neighbours and her friends. While she sometimes saw the former as the representatives of an oppressive surveillance culture maintained through gossip, she nevertheless benefited from what Han calls their "acts of silent kindness" (2012: 79). Several women on her street could be counted on to look after Amina's younger sister when she had to travel for work, and they would often bring Amina bowls of couscous on Fridays since they knew that it was less practical for her to prepare such a meal for only two people. They did this by insisting their actions were mere afterthoughts, which allowed them to keep up the pretence that Amina did not need their help. Accordingly, these were not acts of charity in need of reciprocation. At the same, time however, Amina sometimes refused the care extended to her as a way of asserting her own abilities and position in the community, an attitude that could easily be described by what Das calls the "strong ethics of endurance" (2013: 218).

Ultimately, Amina insisted on her self-reliance by often telling me that she was "tough" and could always "take care of herself" (Fr. *se debrouiller*). Her body, however, often failed her, and the chronic character of her illness made her feel helpless at times. "Look at me," she would say and point with dismay at what she lamented as a body marked by illness. "This is all because of the medication and the stress. What can I do? I cannot quit my job and I have to take this medicine." While Amina accepted the things she perceived to be outside of her control, she compensated by developing a mastery over the material aspects of her home. As a consequence the un-homely seemed to reside alongside her persistent work of securing a better life, forming the two faces of what Das calls domesticity (2008). Through the bodily performance of daily routines and home-making practices, Amina worked to shore up her confidence in herself and in the future. In the next section I discuss how this resilience was manifested through Amina's skilful and ingenious daily management of her scarce resources.

Home-making: rituals, routines and skills in and out of the ordinary

It was a typically sunny Sunday in April when I was on my way to pick up Amina from her house. We had planned to spend the afternoon in downtown Casablanca, window-shopping and perhaps going to our favourite café. When I arrived, however, I found

Amina in the midst of her weekly cleaning. As she was quick to tell anyone who asked her about how she spent her Sundays, Amina would always say: "*Kif dima. Hammamit, jeffeft, ghesselt, wa teferejt telfaza*."(As usual. I went to the *hammam*, scrubbed the floors, did laundry, and watched TV). Weekdays, Amina would get up at 7 a.m., hurriedly get dressed, have a quick breakfast with her sister, and head out to work. At lunch she would return to prepare a small meal and take a short nap before returning to the office. Most evenings Amina arrived home at around 9 p.m. and collapsed into sleep, sometimes before managing to finish her dinner.

While the scholarly literature has tended to see routines as the emblem of an alienating modernity, or in Ben Highmore's formulation "a straightjacket of dull repetition" (2004: 307), drawing on ethnographic material gleaned with Amina's help, I argue that routines can also be instrumental in contributing a sense of stability and control to lives otherwise marked by chronic insecurity (cf. Desjarlais 1997). As such, the routines that Amina claimed defined her monotonous life also provided her with a sense of structure and stability, in a context in which contingency was abundant. Following Michel de Certeau, in this section I propose to look at everyday routines as more than just the tedious "background to social activity" (de Certeau 1984: xi), a project that has been increasingly taken up in the past decades (see Lefebvre 1991, de Certeau and Giard 1998, Highmore 2002), and explore how the repetitious nature of what have otherwise been considered chores, reveals meaningful reinterpretations of lived experience. Furthermore, as I discuss in the following section, the choice to approach mundane tasks through the prism of skilful practice empowered practitioners like Amina, while at the same time providing a unique insight into the articulation of class, gender and everyday politics of survival on the margins of Casablanca. The role of the body and the amount of physical labour that went into this set of daily practices were not insignificant, as I shall describe. Furthermore, I will argue that through the development of a certain degree of mastery in the execution of such daily tasks, the boundary between routine and ritual became blurred, bringing forth a new register of embodied practices.

Hammam

Whereas during the week the body performed the routines that ensured the running of everyday life, once a week it worked on itself in a ritualised form of routine that allowed for its renewal (cf. Turner 1967). This was most powerfully exemplified by the weekly trips to the local *hammam*. A Moroccan version of the Turkish public bath, the *hammam*

continues to occupy a central space in the lives of ordinary Moroccans, particularly for those like Amina, who did not have a bathroom at home.[165] Early on in my fieldwork Amina invited me to join her for her weekly *hammam* visits, an invitation I took up several times, before the summer heat made these visits more sparse. On these occasions we would wake up at half past six in the morning and assemble the various things that make up the arsenal needed at the *hammam*. Amina would get her sister dressed and prepare their respective duffle bags containing a change of clothes, bathrobes and towels, slippers and toiletries. Holding three large pink plastic pails, two little plastic stools and a soft, rolled up bathroom mat we would head out into the deserted alleyway as the dawn was slowly colouring the sky a bright hue. "If we are there by 7 we can avoid the crowds. It's better when it's empty," is what Amina said to me on the occasion of our first visit in order to justify our early rise.

Arriving at the *hammam*, only a few streets away, we were indeed greeted by a mostly empty changing room. After paying the 15 dirhams (£ 1) at the entrance and purchasing some *savon beldi* (traditional black soap made from olives), we undressed down to our underpants, stored our belongings in one of the many open shelves, and entered the steamy cavernous rooms of the *hammam*. In her work on beauty rites and rituals in Casablanca, Susan Ossman claims that people go to the *hammam* as a form of leisure, "in the same way that the middle and upper classes frequent sports clubs to relax" (2002: 182). Although the analogy contained in this statement seems to imply that going to the *hammam* is an activity that only certain social categories engage in, she does explain that there are various types of *hammams*, from the most basic to the more luxurious and spa type. I would add that the experiences one can have in these spaces differ accordingly, and I would further argue that in the case of the *hammam sha'abi* (the working-class *hammam*), such as the one Amina and I frequented, leisure was but one (and a small) component of a complex form of routinized ritualized work performed with and on the body.

Once inside the *hammam*, Amina would choose a spot next to the tiled wall and lay out her stool and bathmat, after which she would help her sister sit down. From that point onward we had to engage in a particular sequence of acts and gestures so as to achieve a "proper" *hammam* experience. If I ever skipped a step or tried to perform them

[165] A considerable number of my working-class informants, even when owning a shower, continued to go to the *hammam,* because it was thought to allow for a proper, thorough body cleaning, for which a shower was not sufficient.

in a different order Amina would be sure to chide or gently mock me. From a small faucet in the wall Amina would fill the buckets with a mix of scalding hot and cold water. Pushing the buckets along the floor she would then use a small plastic cup to scoop up water from the bucket and douse it on herself. The next step entailed applying the *savon beldi* all over the body and allowing it "to work" on the skin. Its specific properties were meant to help in the following step, which was the exfoliating of skin over the entire body with the help of a black rough glove. This second step was the most labour intensive part of the process, and I was encouraged to scrub myself vigorously from head to toe in order to remove all my dead skin cells. Women usually help each other for exfoliating their backs, and in some *hammams* it was possible to ask one of the female attendants to help with this exercise in exchange for a small fee. However, in *hammams* like the one in Amina's quarter, most women worked on themselves, diligently and with intention, using gestures and movements that echoed those they employed in scrubbing their houses.

Shrouded in steam, some women exchanged words with their friends or neighbours, but mostly the atmosphere was not the boisterous, socially effervescent one that Ossman hints at in her narrative, and which risks falling in the trap of many Orientalist depictions of the *hammam* as sensuous sociality (2002: 183). There were few points in the cleaning ritual at which the body was not performing some form of work, either on itself or on another. Specifically, Amina did not only have to perform her own cleaning ritual but that of her sister as well. After the exfoliation, she would use the water in the pails to rinse herself off and proceed with washing her own and her sister's hair, shaving, lathering themselves with shower cream, and repeating the rinsing several times. In between moments of handling her own body or that of her sister, she would rinse away the dirty water towards the drain in the middle of the room, detangle hairs from her comb or replace scrubbing gloves, soaps and other such things in the area around us. In this way, each woman created a bubble of watery activity around herself in the *hammam*, while constantly managing the boundaries of this space so that one did not splash water on one's neighbour, or allow tufts of hair to flow onto someone else's bathmat. Squatting on the tiny plastic stools fit for a toddler, or sitting with one's legs spread out on a bathmat, body posture in the *hammam* also had to be managed to ensure modesty, which meant that comfort was not always a priority.

After the final rinse, we would move into the first room of the *hammam*, where we could put on our bathrobes or towels and slowly exit into the much cooler air of the

changing room. As we got dressed and pulled a woolly *djellaba* over our clothes, Amina would always remark on the smoothness of our "new" skin. As soon as we returned to her house she would bring out the blankets, and at ten a.m. on a Sunday we would be ready to take a long nap as a reward for the thorough cleaning performed on our bodies.

Work performed so laboriously on the body that one requires rest afterwards can be seen as a form of what Mary Douglas has identified as the prophylactic practices necessary for "ordering" the world through the separation of matters deemed polluting, as a way of "articulating the body" and re-affirming its being (2002: 159). Female bodies in particular have been traditionally associated with polluting substances and the fluid and "slimy" aspects of corporeal excreta, and thus requiring specialized forms of cleansing rituals (Dürr and Jaffee 2010). Beyond the hygienic aspects of *hammam* rituals, however, such weekly visits also functioned as a way of reassuring the community that one's body was well. Oftentimes, when walking through the streets of Hay Mohammadi with Amina, female neighbours would stop and ask her if she had been ill since they had not seen her at the *hammam* that week. The cleansing ritual was also seen as a way of maintaining one's health, and the common greeting for those who had just exited the *hammam* was a hearty "*Bi sahatek!*" (To your health). This greeting was also meant to ward off the evil eye, something one was supposedly more vulnerable to when freshly cleansed.

It should be noted, however, that neither Amina, nor any of my other close female informants whom I accompanied on visits to the *hammam* attached solely hygienic or solely symbolic/religious significance to their cleansing rituals. As the considerable literature on bodily ritual and pollution has described for other locales (see Das 1992, Burke 1996, Nguyen and Peschard 2003), such cleaning routines and their skilful execution produced an entirely different performance register, an 'ordinary' ritual that contained and blended ideas about hygienic concerns with symbolic meanings. In fact, when prompted by my questions, Amina also emphasised the pragmatic aspects of the *hammam* visit, such as the cosmetic benefits of exfoliating once a week or the need to give her sister a thorough bath, given the lack of proper facilities in their own home. While religious ideas linked to purity and pollution were most clearly manifested through the practice of daily ablutions, other symbolic meanings were expressed in the form of local superstitions about performing bodily cleaning. thus, in our conversations on the topic Amina set the pragmatic aspects of the *hammam* against specific superstitions about using

the squat shower in her own home. As such, Amina told me that one should not shower at night, because one could become exposed to *jnun*[166] and thus catch a cold or an illness.

Gendered skill

Allow me to loop back to that particular day in April when I was due to go out into town with Amina. In order to speed up our departure for downtown, I insisted that Amina let me to hang up the laundry. As she agreed, I noticed she was washing her jeans by hand in a large plastic tub placed next to the washing machine. Confused, I asked if the machine was broken. Giving me a half-embarrassed laugh she said: "No. I just prefer to wash these by hand." Without much reflection, I protested by saying she was ruining her hands and her jeans would be cleaner if she washed them in the machine. Not to mention, it would save her time. Offering me various reasons for her laundry washing habits, Amina concluded, almost defiantly: "I don't mind. *Ana hadga!* One day, when I'll get married, *inchallah*, I would like nothing more than to stay at home and clean all day."

Ana hadga can be roughly translated as meaning "I am resourceful," but few people stop at that when defining the term. Bringing to mind Luce Giard's "creative ingenuity" (1998: 159), *hadga* seems to encompass the myriad different abilities needed and aspired to by any good homemaker. When pushed for a precise definition, Fatima, another close female informant from Hay Mohammadi in her early fifties impatiently explained that *hadga* is simply someone who is good at everything (*quelqu'un qui sait faire tout*), but foremost, a woman who is ready for marriage. Ait Mouss also discusses this term in her portrait of Saadia, the lower-class Casablancan housewife (see Chapter 3) (2011: 51). According to Ait Mouss, a *hadga* woman is "intelligent […] but also energetic (the opposite of a lazy woman), who gets up early, and is constantly doing housework, etc." As a desirable value in a good wife, *hadga* also seemed to inspire a wealth of Internet resources. A simple online search yielded an abundance of online discussion groups and blogs with the word *hadga* in their title, overwhelmingly dedicated to swapping recipes and home-keeping tips. One such online blog authored by a woman from Marrakech defined the *hadga* woman thus: "She's a hardworking, thrifty, creative, resourceful woman whose work stands testament to her character. The triumvirate she rules by is

[166] In Islamic tradition, *jnun* (pl.) are spiritual beings similar to angels, but with the ability to interfere in the affairs of humans, occasionally to detrimental effect. The 72nd *sura* of the Qur'an, *Sūrat al-Jinn*, is dedicated to the topic of *jnun.*

cleanliness, thrift and nourishment."[167] The author also mentioned that the set of skills and practices that determine a woman's quality as *hadga* could be interpreted as unnecessarily laborious, as my own reaction shows. This was particularly visible in relation to cleaning activities. While embraced in other areas of life, modern electronic equipment was rarely used in the process of house cleaning. With the exception of salons and sleeping rooms, most house floors were tiled in Hay Mohammadi. Bending at the waist, Amina – like many other women – would stoop forward and mop the floor by working a piece of cloth called a *jeffaf* with her bare hands from one end of the house to the other. In order to clean the carpeted areas in the salon, a special small hand brush was used in a similar body pose to remove the crumbs and lint that accumulated over time.

Despite being described as skilled resourcefulness, *hadga* was seldom the preferred term for qualifying work done outside the home, or for that matter work done by a man. In order to impress upon me the aberration of a man doing housework, one day Amina pointed out one of her neighbours to me. Standing in the doorway of his house, thin and grey-haired, the man was wearing a worn-out apron with a flower pattern. Giggling with mischief, and hinting that he might suffer from mental illness, Amina told me how everyone in the neighbourhood was in the habit of deriding him because of his effeminate behaviour. By half-jokingly associating mental disability with men who do housework, Amina discredited all my attempts to suggest that there was nothing abnormal about men doing domestic work. "*Heshouma*!" (Shame!), she would jokingly hiss at me, when I told her my partner cooked dinner for us frequently. She would then add, in what became an almost ritualised exchange we would have on the topic: "He should never even get near the kitchen! Poor man."

Although Amina did admit that in theory it would be nice if men and women shared domestic work, she personally seemed resigned to what she saw as the status quo: "That will never happen in Morocco. Men here are just not like that." This highly gendered vision of domestic labour was less fixed in practice, and I often saw un-married men help with house chores. Hamid, another informant in his late twenties who lived a few streets away from Amina, told me that when his mother travelled to visit relatives "of course" he and his brother cooked their own meals and did the cleaning. When he would get married though, he added, he would prefer that his wife took care of the domestic

[167] See http://www.moroccoboard.com/viewpoint-5/361-nora-fitzgerald/5663-morocco-women-going-extra-mile-in-ramadan

work. Joanne Hollows urges us "to think about how domestic practices do not take place within a pre-given entity such as 'the family'", and invites us to consider the gendering of housework as produced, performed (2008: 60), and, I would add, constantly re-negotiated as well as potentially deployed to accumulate particular forms of symbolic power and capital.

Joan Williams has shown how working-class women might tactically deploy the image of 'family' and 'hearth' as a way of claiming a privileged position "against the injuries of class" (2000: 157). Furthermore, as feminist scholars and anthropologists have argued elsewhere (Martens and Scott 2005), the designation of the domestic realm as women's realm should not be exclusively viewed as a form of subjugation, but might also function as a way of boundary creation through which women get a sense of empowerment and control by excluding men from that space (hooks 1991). At the same time, Amina's acceptance of what she saw as the status quo was also revealing of the manner in which she perceived her position in society, and then chose to leverage her skills as a *hadga* woman for the purpose of amassing a particular form of locally-recognized social capital. Through its strict association with women and the domestic realm, *hadga* became one of the ways in which an ideal, desirable aspect of femininity and home were produced. On many occasions I saw young girls commended for their help in the kitchen or with cleaning by an enthusiastic "*tebarak Allah 3lik, nti hadga*" (God bless you, you are *hadga*), which contributed to the re-enforcement and inculcation of this ideal. As any ideal, however, that of being *hadga* was by no means static or unanimously practiced and embraced.

Visiting Asma (see Introduction and Chapter 2) in Ain Sebaa, I jokingly chided her for not being *hadga* since her kitchen was in some disarray, with unwashed dishes piled up in the sink. In the joking manner typical of our friendship, I asked if she was not afraid her husband would be upset to see this. Her retort was that Khalid had not married her for her services as a cleaning lady. As we laughed together she went on to add that Moroccan women were their own worst enemy: "They think that if they pamper their men, then the men will stay faithful. That's just crazy! If they [men] want a *bonne* then get a *bonne*![168] A marriage is something else." In fact, Asma and Khalid were one of several married couples I knew around Hay Mohammadi who shared the burden of housework in a

[168] In my experience, the French word was used interchangeably in Moroccan Arabic (darija) to refer to both a maid and a nanny, since often a *bonne* will be responsible for both. The more common darija word for a maid or a cleaner is *khedama*, which literally means 'she who works'.

seemingly effortless manner that juggled work schedules, social obligations and their own personal disposition to engage in this type of work.

Because her husband sometimes worked night shifts, I often stayed over at Asma's home, keeping her company. On one such occasion she decided to prepare a *tagine* stew for our dinner. Leaving the meal to cook slowly in the kitchen, we sat down in the salon to chat. Distracted by our conversation, we were reminded of our meal when the scent of burning reached us from the kitchen. This episode became a running joke that would be brought up whenever her siblings or friends teasingly questioned Asma's cooking skills. In fact Asma was a perfectly capable cook, and often prepared food at her mother's house or on special occasions. However, growing up in a large family as the second youngest of eleven siblings, Asma managed to exempt herself from some of the home-making tasks her older sisters had to learn: "When I was young, I played outside with the boys all day. I was not interested in learning to cook, and clean, and all those things. My sisters did all that." Indeed, the option of being *hadga* or exceptionally skilled in home-making/keeping practices seemed to intersect in revealing ways with one's socio-economic status in the community.

Only recently married at the time of my fieldwork, working full time and without any children at that point, Asma did not feel the need or pressure to demonstrate her housekeeping skills to anyone. Furthermore, she had the relative luxury of living in close proximity to both her mother and mother-in-law, as well as having most of her older siblings settled in Casablanca. Mealtimes were thus spent in a careful balancing act either at her mother's house or at her in-laws, while evening social visits would often take us to her older sisters' homes for tea and cake. For dinner, Asma and Khalid would sometimes go to a local affordable pizza place, or meet their friends from university in downtown Casablanca. Other times, Asma claimed they would just throw together a simple meal of bread and eggs. Although both Amina and Asma were employed full-time, they both earned the minimum wage and owned no significant savings or property. Asma and her husband's rent alone was the equivalent of Asma's salary. However, Asma's husband and their extended family acted as a support network and could provide her with necessary social and economic capital in case of hardship (cf. Bourdieu 1987).

Amina was considerably more vulnerable in the face of contingency and thus needed to develop alternative forms of social and cultural capital. Not having the benefit of a similar support network, Amina was pragmatically forced to become a resourceful,

skilled homemaker, which would ensure her wellbeing both in the present as well as in the future, when a suitor would hopefully appreciate her skills and guarantee her a good marriage. Beyond the production of a particular form of locally-recognized social capital, such intense preoccupation with the skilful ordering and management of the household takes us back to the previous discussion of the un-homely and closely echoes Navaro-Yashin's observations of Turkish-Cypriot homes, where she sees these practices as "unarticulated efforts […] to overcome feelings of the uncanny, to render the uncanny less visible or less effective, to pacify its affects" (2012: 186). Following Navaro-Yashin, I would also argue that Mary Douglas's work on dirt comes to echo Freud's discussion of the un-homely. In the same way that dirt is omnipresent "matter out of place" in need of ordering, so the uncanny, or the un-homely, needs to be constantly contained and accounted for through skilful everyday routines. This constant accounting for the uncanny, the tragic, or the negative aspects of domesticity is also something that feminist scholars have emphasised with regards to the process of home-making. Dayaratne and Kellett (2008: 66) argue that homemaking is a process that "continues and consolidates itself with each event of significance that adds to the sense of home by overcoming the obstacles which might diminish it." This includes, as I have already suggested, both traumatic as well as felicitous events, because, as Baxter and Brickel suggest, "home is a place of comings and goings, of living and dying, of moving in and moving out, of material decay and repair" (2014: 140).

Ritual routines

The epitome of these skills was to be manifested during the holy month of Ramadan, when the home became the foremost place for enacting the rituals of piety and the coming together of the family and community. During this month of fasting and abstention from all things deemed immoral, mosque attendance and prayer carry an added weight. Looked at in another way, Ramadan can be seen as a period of intensified effort at re-affirming a particular ordering of the world. That which is considered polluting to the spirit and the body is removed and carefully policed, in order to make room for those things that are recognized as worthy and pure. While during the rest of the year the boundaries between pure and impure things were negotiated more fluidly and less drastically, Ramadan was the time-space when "contagion", to borrow another term from Mary Douglas, was avoided at all costs. At the same time, it should be stressed that for most of my informants and friends in Hay Mohammadi, Ramadan was not only a time of challenge but also of joy

alongside family and community. While piety and moral norms of behaviour are supposed to be re-enforced during this time of fasting and prayer, the festive character associated with the daily breaking of the fast led many to consider the holy month of Ramadan as a homecoming of sorts. Safia, a girl in her early twenties from Hay Mohammadi whom I had met early on in my fieldwork (see Chapter 3 on her wearing the *niqab*), told me that for her Ramadan was like a good friend coming home, but at the same time it signified her own return to the true home of piety, an attempt at living "properly within the faith". However, while prayer and proper moral behaviour form the backbone of this special time-space, the preparation and eating of food were the most visible and immediate reward for those who engaged in this month-long tribulation.

Weeks before the arrival of Ramadan, stores began to stock up on great quantities of the foods that have become central to Ramadan meals. One week before the beginning of Ramadan in June 2013, I accompanied Amina on a trip to her local *Acima* (a supermarket chain) [169] where she was going to purchase in bulk most of the non-perishable products she would need for the coming holy month. Amina took a large shopping cart and joined the throngs of customers with her shopping list in hand. Towering around us were stacks upon stacks of cooking oil bottles and "La Vache qui Rit" processed cheese. [170] Black tea in green cardboard boxes was being loaded by the dozen into other people's carts. Tuna and tomato paste cans joined massive flour sacks, blue cone-shaped sugar packets, packs of margarine and boxes of dates. Amina diligently went about finding the items on her list. Having to stock up only for her sister and herself, her cart was considerably less full than most, but it contained all the essential ingredients for ensuring her Ramadan would be gratifying.

A typical *ftour* meal (the meal that breaks the fast) began with *temar* (dates), hard-boiled eggs, and a bowl of hot *harira* (tomato and chickpea soup), and continued with a variation of meat-filled *batbout* (small soft Moroccan pita bread), *msemen* (square pan-fried dough), and various other small savoury pastries. Fruit shakes were also very popular for breaking the fast, as was orange juice, and copious amounts of water. All this as well as the remaining meals that were to be had throughout the night, up until *suhur* or the break of dawn, needed elaborate preparation that required women to spend long hours in

[169] Acima is one of several large food retail firms in Morocco that command a large portion of the sector. Others include the French franchises Carrefour, Auchan and Metro. Amina and my other informants in Hay Mohammadi preferred Acima, as the store frequently offered discounts on bulk-purchases.
[170] "The Laughing Cow" brand is a well-known French dairy produce brand, present all over Morocco.

the kitchen during the day. Work schedules were normally reduced during Ramadan, and this allowed Amina to arrive home an hour before sunset to begin preparing the meal. Being *hadga,* in this context, also meant devising pragmatic ways of reducing the amount of work needed for preparing the meals every day. This was necessary as the rigors of fasting during the hottest month of the summer,[171] while also working full time, left Amina exhausted at a point in the day when most women were expected to be well under way with the arduous food preparations for the *ftour* as well as other meals. Amina's freezer was very useful in this respect as she made large batches of soup and dough that could easily be defrosted for later use, instead of prepared from scratch everyday.

In João de Pina-Cabral's work, the hearth defines the house, with the subsequent implication that all those who have shared in the commensality of the home become part of that household (1986: 39). This resonates in two ways with the rituals and routines observed during Ramadan. Breaking the fast with Amina, and later on with several other friends as I honoured generous invitations throughout the whole month, I was repeatedly told that I was now "one of the house". Similarly, all those who have shared in the meal rituals of the holy month can be considered as having become part of the liminal home that Ramadan is. Home as hearth is thus reinforced during the holy month when abstention from and preparation of food become the central preoccupations of homemakers.[172] The labour that goes into the preparation of Ramadan meals is also highly gendered. Fatima, a housewife in her fifties whom I befriended early on in my fieldwork told me that to go to the mosque instead of staying home to prepare the house and the food for breaking the fast would not be welcome in the eyes of God. This view, which was echoed by several other informants during my time in Hay Mohammadi, maintained that housework was as virtuous as prayer when accomplished in order to honour the holy month.[173] During this time, men also altered their routines, by frequenting café s less regularly and spending more time at the mosque or at home during the afternoons. Although they might be called on to make the purchases of fresh food needed throughout the month, men were mostly absent from the work of food preparation. As such, Ramadan was a time when women's routine skills were elevated to the level of highly meaningful

[171] In 2013 Ramadan began on July 8th and ended on August 7th.
[172] Breaking the fast without a religiously accepted reason is considered a grave sin, and debates have been raging in Morocco in recent years after a group of young activists held a public picnic in 2009 in order to protest Article 222 of the Moroccan Penal Code, which criminalizes public fast-breaking.
[173] According to a common interpretation in Islam, "women receive the most blessings" for their prayer right at home, in private, whereas men receive the most blessings in congregation. See Hadith No. 727, Book of Adhan, Sahih Bukhari, Vol.1.

ritual practice, and an ideal temporary sense of home was created for the time of one month.

While this sense of belonging to one great spiritual home was the ideal espoused by those who engaged in the practice of fasting and prayer during Ramadan, socio-economic differences also became dramatically visible during this time in Casablanca as well as inside Hay Mohammadi. As such, similar to what Christa Salamandra has pointed out in her ethnography of Old Damascus, Ramadan can also be a time when social distinctions are reinforced (2004: 95). As a time of heightened awareness about ritual as well as physical states of purity, ideas about cleanliness and the moral value attached to this state, played a significant role in the production of internal difference and the drawing of social and physical boundaries within Hay Mohammadi. This was most clearly illustrated in recurring statements made by my close interlocutors Asma and Fatima during the holy month in 2013. On a visit to Fatima's home one morning we were discussing her strategies for keeping the small home clean and neat especially during Ramadan when they received more visits from friends and relatives. Without my asking Fatima began to speak about the inhabitants of the nearby *karyane* and their disregard for cleanliness:

> "I have to clean all the time because that is how I am. Everyday day before lunch I sweep and wipe the floors with *Javel* (a cleaning and disinfectant product). I'm not like those who live in the *karyane* (*nass dyal karyane*). They live with their own waste (using the French *leur pipi*) and it doesn't bother them because they are used to it, they are dirty (*musakh*). I could not live like that; it would burn my nose."

I found Fatima's claim surprising for its intense stereotyping of the *karyane* dwellers and asked if she had experienced this first-hand. Fatima's answer was swift: she had not, of course, because she would never go that close to the remains of the *karyane* in her everyday dealings through the neighbourhood. As the wife of a retired civil servant and stay at home mother to a young daughter who constantly reported good grades, Fatima already enjoyed a relatively elevated status within her close circle of friends and neighbours. Her statement nevertheless served the double purpose of distancing herself morally from the perceived internal *other* of the *karyane* dwellers and of drawing a clear boundary around the space of the *karyane* and separating it from the everyday neighbourhood spaces that she frequented.

Such crude examples of descriptions stereotyping a certain group of inhabitants – in varying degrees of seriousness – were somewhat frequent in everyday conversations. What marked the inhabitants of the *karyane* as a distinct moral *other* within Hay Mohammadi was their identification with a specific physical space – that of the *karyane* – and the material degradation visible inside that space. Variations on this discursive form of *othering* focused on establishing the moral difference or intellectual incompetence of *karyane* dwellers through other means. Frequently this entailed criticising *karyane* dwellers for engaging in conspicuous consumption. Asma claimed that she had attended a *ftour* meal in the home of a distant cousin in a *karyane* in Ain Sebaa where the interior décor rivalled that of an expensive hotel: "*Besah!* (Seriously). They spent more than 6 000 dirhams on the furniture and *zelij* (tile decoration). They even had a second floor built. All this for a home in the *karyane* that will one day be demolished by the *commune* (local administration)."

The growing commodification, or what Walter Armbrust (2002) has called the "Christmasization" of Ramadan and the focus on consumption have come to overwhelmingly represent this time of year, drawing criticism from both religious authorities as well as ordinary people. In fact, the effort and money invested in preparing the food that will be consumed during the nights of the holy month are both very visible and considerable, and various media outlets in Morocco dedicated airtime to covering the spike in consumption as well as food prices ahead of the holy month. As Amina observed during the days running up to Ramadan in 2013, wealthy families may break the fast at elaborately decorated and lavishly expensive restaurants, following this up with strolls in the upscale parts of Casablanca's beachfront. While such distinctions are not unique to Hay Mohammadi or Casablanca, they were acutely felt by my research participants.

Amina had asked me weeks in advance to break the fast with her on the first day of Ramadan in June 2013, joking that everyone else in the neighbourhood would have to get in line if they wanted to ask me over. That day I arrived at her house three hours before *ftour*, carrying a small gift of foodstuffs I knew would be welcome during a coming month of intense consumption. Amina immediately set me to work on peeling the carrots for the filled *batbout* pies, while she was busy preparing the *harira* in the tiny kitchen. Her sister smiled at me from the sofa where she was watching a TV show. The food preparations kept us busy for a while, and Amina was increasingly anxious about having the soup ready on time. Additionally, she insisted on apologising for what she called the "rather bland

variation of *harira*" she had prepared, owing to the dietary restrictions placed on her by her health condition. As I assured her that I was an unfussy eater, we proceeded to set the table and wait for the call to prayer that would signal the breaking of the first day of fasting. Moments later the TV programme was abruptly interrupted and the recorded call to prayer that was so familiar to me from previous years of living and working in Morocco was broadcast by the main Moroccan public TV station. Still, Amina waited. "I am waiting for the call from our own mosque", was her reply to my inquisitive looks. And moments later, the crackle from the green mosque in Amina's quarter offered the confirmation that we might indeed break the fast. Reaching for the dates and the cold water bottle, our joy was short-lived, as the light bulbs and TV screen began to flicker violently and the power suddenly went out. The stillness that I had always associated with the time of *ftour* gradually gave way to the stirring of neighbours and children in the alleyway outside Amina's home. The entire neighbourhood had been plunged into darkness, and several neighbours angrily discussed calling the electrical company. As we went back indoors to light some candles and enjoy the rest of our meal Amina, visibly upset, told me: "I'm so sorry this happened. You see, for the poor even the first night of Ramadan has to go badly."

While the spiritual and contemplative nature of Ramadan was not lost on my informants, Amina's reaction made clear that the material aspects of the holiday were equally valued, providing her with a sense that she was able to honour the rituals of the holy month in 'proper' fashion. Furthermore, as Samuli Schielke points out in his writing on the practicing of piety during the holy month in Egypt, "Ramadan is a time of exceptional reward" (2009: 27). Although Amina could have invoked her chronic illness as a way of avoiding the strain of fasting during one of the hottest periods of that year, she had planned to fully participate as a way of affirming her membership and belonging in the community. When the power went out in Hay Mohammadi during that first *ftour*, the social differences that were navigated more fluidly during the rest of the year were abruptly brought to the fore of Amina's mind, as she was quick to think that this would only happen in a *sha'abi*, lower-class area. Consequently, her reward for the work of fasting and meal preparation was diminished by the electrical failure.

Conclusion

The embodied performance of seemingly mundane home-making practices discussed in this chapter can be seen as a gendered commentary on the un-ending work entailed in maintaining life in the economically precarious context of Casablanca's margins. While preceding chapters have looked at the representational and discursive practices that contributed to the production of the negative image associated with the social spaces of Hay Mohammadi, in this chapter I have sought to provide a more intimate look at the survival practices required in the face of on-going contingency. By looking beyond immediate concerns with hygiene and aesthetics, through the material presented here I have sought to reveal the complex and multi-facetted nature of what is entailed in creating and sustaining a sense of well-being through the organization of domestic space on the urban margins. Read in the context of the existing literature on domesticity in the region, home and the process of dwelling in Hay Mohammadi, I have argued, take diverse forms, some more felicitous than others. In particular, I have tried to show that in the case of this marginalized neighbourhood, home-making is an ambivalent process, marked by happy memories as well as histories of trauma, and equally defined and experienced as un-homely and alienating. As Amina's story revealed, these aspects are also inflected with classed experiences of place, and strongly influenced by both the actual presence of economic insecurity as well as the more diffuse anxieties about material scarcity.

Historically portrayed as a safe space and a sanctuary where honour and the prized possessions are safeguarded, the cultural meanings associated with home space in Hay Mohammadi were less clear-cut. Owing to the overlapping of histories of state-violence with personal experiences of family loss and trauma, the fabric of the neighbourhood and individual corporeality became enmeshed, as I have tried to show through the example provided by Amina's particular living situation. Moreover, the continuous precarity with which Amina had to contend led her to devise a form of highly ritualized routines for keeping the un-homely, threatening aspects of the contingent in check. Thus, by looking at the practice of home-making as a form of skilled labour my intention has been to show how women in precarious situations are sometimes forced to develop alternative forms of symbolic capital, in the hope of securing both present as well as future well-being. The way in which these skills are inscribed in or tactically draw on locally valued moral norms complicates facile readings of gendered roles and domestic/spatial practice in an Islamic context. At the same time, the development of *hadga* skills as a gendered form of agency

also highlights significant social differences both within and without Hay Mohammadi. As it became clear in the case of my other close informant, Asma, even within similarly precarious, lower-class quarters, noticeable differences existed. Being able to rely on an extended network of close kin meant that not all women felt the need to become highly skilled home-makers.

Nevertheless, especially during the time-space of the holy month of Ramadan the ability to demonstrate a certain sense of mastery over the routines associated with home-making practices was universally praised, elevating otherwise 'mundane' skills to the level of much anticipated and intensely relished ritual. At the same time, the material practices and aesthetics produced within the domestic realm during Ramadan saliently foregrounded the stark social differences that marked Moroccan society. Aptly captured in Armbrust's term of "Christmasization", the level and sophistication involved in material consumption during Ramadan highlighted the differences that were navigated more easily at other times during the year.

The next chapter will continue and expand the discussion of the central role played by domestic spaces and aesthetics in the re-production of Moroccan society and the spatialization of social difference. It will do so by exploring the un-making of homes entailed in the relocation of the *karyane* inhabitants away from Hay Mohammadi, while also stressing the importance of mobility as a prism through which the future was imagined and secured by my informants.

Chapter 6 | The future on/of the margins: relocation, aspirations, and mobilities

The previous chapter explored the ways in which skilled home-making was deployed by one of my close informants as a way of securing and anchoring her life in a precarious context, focusing on a set of embodied practices that were used to impose order onto contingency as part of an everyday routine. In this final chapter I continue and complete the exploration of home space and its centrality in securing a sense of well being for the inhabitants of Casablanca's margins, but I shift my perspective to include the role of mobility in home relocations, displacements and future aspirations. Drawing on Tim Cresswell's (2010) approach towards mobility as an "entanglement of physical movement, representations, and practices" (2010: 18), I consider how voluntary as well as forced home relocations and their connection with the inauguration of a new transportation network during the time of my fieldwork illuminated important aspects about what the future might entail for Casablanca's expanding margins. In doing so I contrast 'mobility' – which I define as the desirable model of the future envisioned by the Moroccan state and distributed through a network of traditional as well as new media – with 'mobilities'. I employ the latter as a way of recognizing the multiplicity of such experiences, be they of daily travel, home relocations, or aspirations for the future, as they are influenced, constrained and ultimately co-productive of gender and socio-economic distinctions.

Throughout the time of my fieldwork, I became increasingly aware of the fact that imaging and imagining the future were intimately linked in the lives of my informants with the transformations affecting Casablanca's urban landscape. In fact, the future seemed to always be just around the corner, and could often be glimpsed from a position of physical movement. Riding the bus or sitting in the crowded backseat of a shared taxi, Casablancans were confronted with it daily. Adorning the tops of buildings, large advertisements announced the next phase of the most recent 'dream home' housing project (Fig. 16). Architects' glossy renderings of future shopping malls greeted passers-by from the side of construction site fences, while behind these Potemkin displays of 'not-yet' places construction stagnated. Portable versions of these images were also inescapable. Amina, the protagonist of the previous chapter, began collecting the flyers handed to her

daily on the street, amassing in this way a small archive of the most recent housing projects dotting Casablanca's growing periphery (Fig. 17 and Fig. 18). During most of my fieldwork, several radio stations played a French language jingle that asked listeners if they were finally ready to escape the noise of the city and live in the luxurious peace and quiet of a new, gated suburban community.

Judging by the exclusivity of these visions, the price-tags attached to them, and the aesthetics employed to portray them, this cacophony of images envisioning future social and geographical mobility, disseminated through various mediums, seemed to be predominantly aimed at upper-middle class consumers, and therefore elusive for the majority of my informants. Nevertheless, the ubiquity of these images begged the question: Who produced them and in what kind of political and socio-economic ecology did they exist? What sort of future could the inhabitants of Hay Mohammadi hope for, and what sort of images coloured their hopes and dreams? Furthermore, how did these people respond to the visions of future urban modernity enticing them from the omnipresent advertisements? And what would the future look like for those who could not afford the billboard visions? As I began to enquire into this, I learned that for a large majority of my research participants the future entailed mobility through relocation. As I will detail in this chapter, for some this relocation was enforced by the state, while for others it was voluntary.

In this chapter, I begin by presenting the experience of a family that was forcefully relocated from the Karyane Centra` *bidonville* to the outer edges of Casablanca as part of a nation-wide campaign for 'slum-free cities' (VSB programme). In the second section of this chapter I then explore in more depth some of the ways in which both physical as well as social mobility were represented by the Moroccan state and the real estate industry through various forms of publicity, as well as the trajectories, role, and limitations of these representations in the construction of shared meanings, aspirations and imaginaries about the future in Hay Mohammadi. I conclude the chapter with a look at how the new physical spaces of mobility, represented by the tramway, which was championed as an effort to re-modernize the city and an attempt at prefiguring the future, brought the city's social fragmentation once more into stark relief.

Figure 16. Architect's rendering of the planned upscale quarter of Anfa and the *Tours Végétales*, advertised as Casablanca's future elite residence in 2014.

Figure 17. Example of a flyer Amina was given in 2013, advertising a new housing development. The flyer includes basic information such as price per unit (250 000 dirhams, roughly £ 23 000) and contact information for the real estate developer, Canaber Building.

Figure 18. Other examples of flyers Amina collected.

Relocated homes: from marginalization to the periphery

On a bright day in March 2014 I was on my way to visit Hind and her family in the *bidonville*-resettlement neighbourhood of Lahraouiyine. We had met many times throughout my fieldwork in Hay Mohammadi, and common friends mentioned her name every time the topic of dismantling the Karyane Centra` *bidonville* came up. After many brief conversations Hind invited me to meet her family, promising to narrate her story of growing up in the *karyane*, as she referred to it, and talk about their recent relocation to Lahraouiyine. In order to reach the resettlement site I had to take a shared *grand taxi* from the stand at the Kissaria, the covered clothes market in the centre of Hay Mohammadi, which was adjacent to the debris of the slowly disappearing *bidonville*. After enquiring which section of what seemed like a sea of large white vehicles were the cabs going to my destination, my wait was not long. Very soon the six passengers necessary to make a ride had squeezed inside – two in the seat next to the driver and four in the back –, and the old Mercedes Benz lurched out of the parking lot. Speeding in order to make as many rides as possible that day, the driver swerved in and out of lanes in a manner that was both practiced and reckless at the same time.

After leaving the last homes of Hay Mohammadi behind us, we could spot a thin slice of ocean before dipping down into the main artery that separates Casablanca's margins from its more recent periphery. As we drove along we were flanked on one side by a sea of buildings resembling the stacked architecture of the 8x8 homes in Hay Mohammadi, while to the other side the open space of what was once agricultural land stretched dusty-green into the distance. New housing developments clustered together, looking vulnerable, exposed and unfinished. Turning left after a while, we drove past the city's new abattoirs and *Marché de Gros* (wholesale produce market), whose presence could be smelled from afar. We passed the former village of Lahraouiyine, a handful of homes visibly undergoing a process of 'slumification'. In fact, my destination was often referred to as *Lahraouiyine al-Jdid* (New) in order to distinguish it from this decrepit forefather. The glistening ribbon of brand new pavement bypassing the village stretched in front of the taxi like a welcoming carpet. Towering at the entrance to the yet unfinished neighbourhood, a billboard from the Al Omrane Housing Agency[174] declared in French: "The right to housing, the right to happiness" (*Le droit au logement, le droit au bonheur*).

[174] Placed under the supervision of the Ministry of Housing, Urban and Regional Planning, Al Omrane is the primary public operator of housing and 'new town' development and 'slum clearance' programmes. According to documents from the Ministry of Habitat, the Al Omrane Group was born in 2004 of the merger

Before going further, it is important to situate this new housing development in its proper historical and political context. The Lahraouiyine housing project is one of several relocation sites developed under the aegis of the *Cities without Slums* programme (*Villes sans bidonvilles* – commonly referred to as VSB) launched by the Moroccan state in 2003, after the deadly suicide bombings which took place that same year in Casablanca. Although there had been several previous attempts by the state to address the situations of *bidonvilles* in Morocco, the bombings sparked a new approach towards the urban margins. As the first chapter detailed, this shift was still inscribed in and drew on the history of colonial and post-colonial approaches to urban governance, but at the same time entailed a re-orientation towards the internationally recognized model of participatory planning, although participation was often only nominally an aspect of the larger process.

Announced as an extension and an intensification of the objectives outlined in the INDH agenda (El Mahjoub 2015), the Moroccan authorities designed the VSB program with the help of international consultants and expertise, and framed it as an effort that would benefit Moroccan society at large (cf. Zaki 2011, Bogaert 2011). Through this nationwide program the State actively positioned itself as a responsible and benevolent authority not only to inhabitants of informal or illegal settlements across the country, but in the eyes of the international community as well. Presented by the State as first and foremost an initiative for social integration, both local and foreign experts considered the VSB programme a model of "best practices", and in 2010 Morocco's Housing Agency won the UN-Habitat Award.

Nevertheless, the way in which the wider population perceived the VSB programme was mired in confusion and misconceptions. Significantly, many understood the programme to be a handout to the poor. Several of my upper-middle-class interlocutors in Casablanca were convinced that the state was giving brand new homes for free to what they considered to be lazy, unworthy populations. This argument was supported by a common trope, spread through rumours, which held that slum inhabitants were actually richer than they claimed. An acquaintance living in a more upper-middle-class neighbourhood in Casablanca told me once: "You know, some of those people have millions stashed under their mattress. They hide it, and wait for the state to provide!" Telling her that I was familiar with this story and that I found it hard to believe this

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of ANHI (National Shelter Upgrading Agency), Attacharouk Company and SNEC (National Company for Equipment and Construction). Al Omrane later absorbed the ERACs (Regional Entities for Development and Construction), with the latter becoming subsidiary companies.

represented the majority of cases, she retorted: "*Mumkin* (perhaps), but you know, I see the girls from that *bidonville* next door every day and they are all wearing Zara [clothes]!"[175] The power of rumours rests in their ability to capture a society's most vivid anxieties. As Luise White poignantly observed, rumours can "be a source of local history that reveals the passionate contradictions and anxieties of specific places with specific histories" (2000: 83).[176] In the opinion of another close informant with a middle class background familiar with this urban myth, the contradiction inherent in this particular rumour was not necessarily that poor people owning large amounts of money would choose to continue living in precarious conditions. According to him, the contradiction rested in the fact that one could remain "a good Muslim" and withhold one's support for the poor by using a fiction to delegitimize the other's plight. This moral and ethical contradiction intersected in revealing ways with anxieties about social distinction and belonging, which were then spatialized through urban dwelling practices, and to which I will return in the final part of this chapter (cf. Zhang 2010).

In practice the scheme used by the VSB to relocate slum dwellers was much less straightforward than was assumed. Due to the technical language used to describe the programme as well as the intricate arrangements it attempted to implement, few people actually had a clear understanding of its mechanisms. In part this was owed to the fact that until 2003 several *bidonvilles*-clearance mechanisms and procedures had been in place. The variety of approaches was owed to the recognition that not all *bidonvilles* were the same and thus required differential treatment in addressing their relocation. When the United Nations Programme for Habitat awarded the VSB programme the prize for best practices in the field of slum-relocation strategies, it sealed the fate of all other approaches in Morocco.

The VSB programme contracts an intermediary who works with each local administration in the process of resettling that district's *bidonville* inhabitants. The team, aided by the local authorities, conducts a census in order to assess how many households

[175] Zara is a European brand of clothing, whose retail price in Morocco often tends to be higher than in Europe. Associated with a certain prestige and socio-economic status, the brand seems to connote the image of a modern, wealthy consumer.

[176] Shana Cohen has argued that such class anxieties have been politically and economically produced, as public education, the main motor for social advancement in post-Independence Morocco, could no longer guarantee a middle-class position in an era of shrinking labour markets and increasing financialization (2004: 68-70).

are eligible for relocation.[177] The authorities make land available from the state's public reserve. The relocation scheme is premised on the fact that each new relocation plot will house two households from the slum in what is called an R+3. This entails a standard 48 square meter home, with a ground floor and three upper floors. The programme then pairs up two families with a real estate developer, who will be charged with the construction of the new building. The costs for the construction are set at the equivalent of £ 3000 per family. My upper and middle-class interlocutors were incredulous when confronted with this information, with a few maintaining that the price was low enough to be considered a handout. But many *karyane* dwellers struggled to find these resources. In the absence of personal funds the programme also connected families with micro-credit lenders or local banks through a special government-guaranteed funding mechanism (FOGARIM).[178] Recent research into the success-rates of the VSB programme has shown that for many of the relocated dwellers this has led to unsustainable debts (cf. Bogaert 2011, Le Tellier 2009: 106-110).

Hind's story is therefore significant, as it reveals how the specificities of slum dwellers' lives become erased through the relocation process, and masked by a technocratic language which hides the repeated movement, loss and un-making of homes involved in this process. In Hind's case there had been several homes her family had been forced to un-make and move out of, as I will shortly detail. At the time of my fieldwork, Hind had been teaching Arabic literacy classes at a community centre in Hay Mohammadi for close to four years. In the mornings she taught children who had dropped out of school and were trying to re-enter the system, while in the afternoons and evenings she worked with adults, both men and women. In her late twenties, Hind's enthusiasm and energy were barely contained when she spoke about her work. Whenever I ran into her, she would stand out in what I came to recognize as her signature outfits. Always matching her headscarf with the rest of what she was wearing, she would walk in like a pastel coloured breeze in her long skirts, all bright laughter and large brown eyes. Her demeanour was no different on the day of my visit. As we sat down with tea and sweets, Hind began to narrate the story of her life in the *karyane*, in a matter-of-fact tone, even cheerful at times.

[177] As defined by the programme, eligibility is determined by a resident's registered address on their state ID. In her work on slum relocations, Lamia Zaki (2011) explores the implications of the state's recognition of slum residence as a formal address, calling into question the validity of categories such as formal and informal in the context of urban housing regulations. In practice a more nuanced vocabulary of technical designations was actually employed by urban planners and administrators, which distinguished between *illegal* and *irregular* housing. See Ababsa, Dupret and Denis (2012).

[178] For more on this funding scheme see Bogaert (2011: 723) and World Bank (2006a: 16).

Without making light of the situations described, she seemed to treat her experience as common rather than exceptional or pitiable. Her story is one of many that contradict the commonly held stereotypes, like the one voiced by the previously mentioned interlocutor, used to describe and vilify *karyane* dwellers in Morocco:

> "We moved to the *karyane* in 1994. Before then we lived in the *medina qadima* (old town), in a big old house. But there was some trouble, a fight with the extended family over some inheritance so we had to leave. My mother took us – my brother and three sisters, and myself – and moved to Hay Mohammadi, you know, Karyane Centra`, in a *beraka*.[179] When we moved there from the *medina* we didn't know anybody. We rented the *beraka* from a man and brought all our things. We had never been to Hay Mohammadi before. We were *welad al medina* (children of the downtown) and we thought everyone was dangerous, and we would have to be very careful. In the *medina* we had had everything we wanted. It was a shock moving to the *karyane*. When we brought our things, furniture, and carpets, and kitchen things, and people in the *karyane* saw them, they started calling us *gaour* (foreigner), because they had never seen such things! Back then you couldn't get everything you can now in Hay Mohammadi, so they were behind in a way."

While another woman I had met in the *karyane* had told me she had lived there "since the day she opened her eyes onto the world", Hind's story points to the variety of circumstances through which people come to take up residence in a Moroccan *bidonville*. It also touches on the social stigma associated with being a *bidonville* inhabitant, and the ill fame that was associated with the area. Narrating their habituation to life in the *karyane*, Hind's nuanced description contradicts common stereotypes by highlighting the apparent incongruities and ambivalence in people's moral behaviour, but also the role that an everyday routine played in anchoring their displaced family, and normalizing their situation:

> "We adapted, though. My siblings and I went to school and then straight back home. School and home, that was it. We made sure never to stray from the path. Us girls, we walked with our eyes to the ground, not making any eye contact with any of the people. We didn't know any of them, but they all knew us by name very soon. And they looked after us. If some man tried to speak to us on our way to school another man would tell him to leave us alone, that we were the daughters of Hafida, and they shouldn't disrespect us. We were surprised at first, but that is how it was. If my mother would send me with the bread to the

[179] A shanty-home is commonly referred to in darija as a "barrack", or *beraka*, which is speculated to be derived from the French term "baraque".

> oven,[180] a boy I had never met before would take it from me and say 'let me do it, *khety* (sister)', and go himself. They tried to protect us (*kayhafed elina*) because they saw we were honest people. Sometimes we passed by people who were drunk (*nass skeran*), you know, who just sat in the street and drank alcohol all day. But when we went by they would hide the bottle from us [*making a gesture with her hand imitating the movement of hiding something behind one's back*]. So we never had any problem with anybody."

When I asked her about the potential physical dangers or risks of living in the *karyane*, Hind claimed that life was rather normal, no more dangerous than in any other poor neighbourhood. However, there was one dramatic event that stood out in her memory as well as others' I had talked to:

> "One night there was a big fire. This was in 1996, I think. We were asleep and the neighbours came to wake us, told us to get out. I still remember how the tin roof was burning red above our heads and it was very hot everywhere. We ran outside in our pyjamas and left all our things behind. The whole night you could hear all over the *karyane* the *butagas* exploding.[181] Boom! Boom! One after another. By the morning almost everything had burned down. We lost all our things; the nice things people had envied us for, and had to start *à zéro* (from scratch). Someone said this disabled guy who was distilling alcohol in his *beraka* caused it."

Hind could also remember other, smaller fires taking place after that. She also recalled a fire caused by a woman's *butagas*, and another one in 2005 that was sparked by faulty electricity wires.[182]

> "Some people claimed the fires were not an accident. Sometimes we would be warned ahead of time. Someone would go down the alley a day or two before and tell people 'if you have things that are dear to you, put them away', and then we would know something was going to happen. The police found out at one point, and they would try and capture those who spread the rumour before a fire would happen. But people also said 'if you do not *dayr al afia* (make fire)

[180] In many poor and working-class urban areas in Morocco, communal ovens continue to play a large role in the production of a household's daily bread. Charging a small fee for baking homemade bread during specific hours, the communal ovens supplant their income by producing and selling their own bread and pastries as well.

[181] All of Morocco uses 15-kilogram butane gas canisters for cooking. *Butagas* is used as shorthand for the canisters.

[182] The majority of *bidonvilles* in Morocco are branched to the electricity network by makeshift installations, which are tolerated by the authorities. In many cases the authorities charge a fee for the illicit usage. For a discussion of how "getting on the grid" has an impact in the formalisation of informality in Morocco, see Zaki (2008).

> no one will ever pay attention to us'. And you know after the first big fire the government built the Hassan II projects and moved some of the families."

Although the Hassan II projects were indeed built in 1998 to rehouse a section of the *karyane*, the plans for this relocation had first been elaborated in the late 1960s. Stalled by corruption and speculation, 2121 new apartments out of a projected 10 000 were finally completed in 1999, out of which only half were destined for the *karyane* inhabitants.[183] As a consequence, Hind and her neighbours lived for years in a constant state of anxiety of and cautious desire for what they were led to believe would be their impending relocation, and perhaps better living standards. Hind could, therefore, not remember the exact date at which they were informed of their final relocation:

> "I think it was in 2004? We always heard rumours that the government was going to move us. When they started this project [the VSB programme] the *caïd*[184] and some other people started coming to the *karyane* and writing people down. They made a list of who lived where and how many in each family (*'ayla*)."

I asked if it was during one of these census-taking operations that they were informed of the project and what it would entail.

> "No. They didn't tell you anything when they came. They just asked for the name and how many people lived in the *beraka*. We found out from neighbours and by word of mouth that they might move us."

Giving slum dwellers the minimum required information was a strategy used by the representatives of the state in many cases. With the help of an architect friend I was able to approach and interview three civil servants that had been involved the previous year in the process of resettling the inhabitants of two different *bidonvilles* in Casablanca. During conversations I had with the three, this strategy was justified in several ways. Two had no problem manifesting their disdain for the population they had to work with, while another claimed that once the details of a relocation programme were made public a door to

[183] The evolution of the Hassan II housing project was followed by the Moroccan press and reported on most prominently in the newspaper Maroc Hebdo. See the online Archives of Maroc Hebdo: http://www.maroc-hebdo.press.ma/Site-Maroc-hebdo/archive/Archives_596/pdf_596/mhi_596.pdf

[184] According to the Moroccan Dahir n° 1-08-67 of 27 rejeb 1429 (31 July 2008) with regards to the enforcement officers' corps, the *caïd* is the representative of local authority, guarantor of the compliance with Urbanism regulations, and charged with maintaining public order. For a more in depth look at the evolution of the *caïd's* role see Alain Classe (1992).

speculation and corruption would be opened. This attitude ran counter to an aspect of the relocation process I had heard described many times, namely the mention of a social worker as part of the teams assembled by the authorities (*accompagnateur social*). Upon pressing my interlocutors to say more about this role, they were invariably vague in describing the specific work entailed by this position. My own naïveté caused me to picture a benevolent figure, visiting the slum regularly, and providing clarifications and counsel to the families they were supposed to 'accompany' throughout the potentially distressing relocation process. The reality was much less rosy. To my surprise, when I was finally able to identify someone who had partly carried out the role, I was told that the *accompagnateur*'s job was enacted twice in the lifetime of a relocation project: in the very beginning, when their task was to take down the identification details of the *karyane* dwellers, and at the very end, when the inhabitants had been assigned new plots at the relocation site. For their final task, the *accompagnateurs* would visit the family in order to take a photo of their shack, and witness the process of its dismantling. Hind concurred:

> "Yes, that's right. When they finally came and took a photo of our home we had to tear it down that same day. Before that, we went to the *guichet unique* for the *tombola* and were assigned a plot. Then the developer they pair you up with, he has to pay rent for you somewhere else, while he builds the new home. So we went and lived in a new place while we waited for him to complete the house. But you know, these people, they don't just have to build your home and my home. They win contracts from maybe twenty people from the *karyane*. So it took a long time for him to finish. He still has many unfinished homes. So after the six months expired we had to move again and pay for the rent ourselves!"

Although there are fines specified for such cases in which the developer does not complete the project in a timely manner, all parties agreed that six months was not sufficient time to complete a building project and that any legal recourse would only amount to further futile expenses. Eventually, Hind and her family moved into the new home, although much work remained to be done. They arranged to be connected to the water and electricity network and decided to complete the remaining work on their own. As per the R+3 specifications, Hind, together with her mother, unmarried brother and the younger sister's new family took up residence in the second floor apartment, while her older sister's family lived on the third floor. The second floor apartment's 48 square meters[185] were visibly insufficient for accommodating five adults and a young child, but because at the time of

[185] Hind explained to me how in reality, the actual surface was closer to 38 square meters since the plans included the staircase area and the thickness of the walls as part of the 'official' 48 square meters.

the census only one of Hind's sisters had been married, the rest of them were counted as a single household. As a consequence, Hind and her mother slept in the salon by night, while the younger sister, Fatiha, her husband and their young daughter occupied the room next door. Hind's un-married brother lived in the remaining room, which also doubled as a storage room for the family.

The minute space allocated for the kitchen forced the family to perform most of the cooking in the hallway as well as in the building's staircase, where a burner connected to a gas canister was used for the preparation of larger meals. When I made a remark about how the household was forced to spill out into the staircase area, Hind agreed, jokingly pointing out it was a good thing her sister lived upstairs. They could therefore treat the space as part of a larger family house, similar to the multigenerational living arrangements of old homes in the medina. Indeed, if one ignored the fact that the developer owned the first two floors, one could argue that through force of circumstance the family had re-made the home in the image of their old medina house, from which they had been displaced all those years ago.

Such statements characterized Hind's approach towards the changes in her life, demonstrating a tendency to see contingency as a productive force for the better. This also defined her approach towards certain career blocks she had encountered when working towards becoming a lawyer: when lack of funds and corrupt practices closed that career path, Hind embraced the opportunity to become a literacy teacher. Similarly, while some of the relocated families saw the move as a step backwards, Hind's attitude towards the changes brought about by the relocation, though sometimes ambivalent, was mostly positive:

> "Some of the people from the *karyane* did not like it here. They said they were *haddaryin* (urban) and they thought Lahraouiyine was too isolated and rural for them. So they rented out their homes and moved back into the city. We stayed though. We are adaptable. It's true that it's very quiet here, not like in the *karyane*. There you would leave your door open for the breeze and your neighbours would walk in all the time. By the time they knocked and asked if you were home, they were already in the middle of your room asking how you were doing and what were you up to? Here it's different. No one comes, because no one knows each other."

As Hind's statement shows, this loss of sociality, of comings and goings, was both a blessing and a curse. Her words encapsulated the crux of the matter for those in a similar

position, subjected to relocation by the state. Specifically, they juxtaposed the social liveliness of a former, relatively fixed but ultimately precarious home, with the stillness and diminished sociality caused by a radical move. Hind's response to this situation seemed to be a pragmatic one: "You can always prepare for the future and live in the future, but I live fully in the present. It's the best thing (*ahsan haja)*, because you never know what opportunities or challenges might arise." The implications for those in precarious conditions, like Hind, was that mobility via relocation forced her to develop an ability to look at contingency as productive, a coping strategy that has been explored elsewhere by Asef Bayat (1997) and James Holston (2008), and can be considered central to what they argue is a shift in the everyday politics of resistance. Echoes of this approach can also be seen in Farha Ghannam's work on resettled people in Cairo (2002). Constantly faced with insecurity and aware of their own vulnerability in the face of change they felt they have little control over, *karyane* dwellers like Hind and her family developed coping mechanisms which entailed a vivid awareness of the present.

Ideal homes: investing in dreams, securing the future

For some people, however, living in the future allowed them to cope with the present. Investing both financial and material resources as well as imagination into a future dwelling became one way of securing one's place in the world, in a context that was perceived by many in Hay Mohammadi, and Casablanca more generally, to be highly contingent and defined by an "everyone-for-themselves" (*kul wahed fi rashoum*) attitude. During my time in the field several friends and informants from Hay Mohammadi became involved in the process of purchasing an apartment, or discussed the options of buying a plot for a self-built home and eventually moving away from the area. As I fortuitously and repeatedly found myself in the middle of conversations about future homes and apartment prices, I realized that the topic was not only central to my academic interests but also to the lives of my collaborators at that time. In fact, my closest informants hardly ever discussed the future as an abstract, temporal dimension emanating from the present. Their visions of the 'not yet' were strongly anchored in and mediated by the material culture and physical place of the home. In what follows, I thus look at how the process of creating an ideal home implied both the process of purchasing property and domestic furnishings – what I refer to as 'securing the future in the present' – as well as the self-conscious selection and appropriation of images of the future.

In March 2013 Amina told me that she had been saving money in order to buy a new apartment and move out of Hay Mohammadi. She asked me to keep this a secret because she did not want anyone in the community to think she had a great amount of money. Through her participation in a local rotating credit association (*qra')* Amina had managed to save a small sum that she could use for the legal fees involved in the purchase. However, the rent control she had so arduously fought for (see previous chapter) still only allowed her to save a fraction of the amount needed to make a down payment on a new flat. Amina had therefore resumed talking to her estranged older sister and was hoping that, when she would visit Morocco for Ramadan that year, she could ask her for a loan to help with the down payment. In the meantime, Amina secured and assembled her future home in a piecemeal manner, inspired by the images she saw in real-estate ads as well as on the Internet. On one of our Sunday outings in the city in May 2013, Amina suggested a quick visit to the downtown department store Alpha 55.[186] Taking the escalator to the upper floors, we arrived in the home décor area, where Amina began to browse through the various items on display. "I really like scented candles," she said, taking a whiff of one of the pastel coloured candles. "*Fi dari jdid* (in my new home), *inchallah,* I would like to decorate the salon in purple. You know, I often daydream about how I would arrange everything in my new home. What type of curtains, which decorations. I sometimes look online at Kitea displays.[187] I get ideas about how my salon could look like. Then there is that TV show, have you seen it? Where they go to someone's house and they re-paint and re-do all the furnishings. I really enjoy watching that!"

Amina did not only invest ideas and time into her future home, but would also often play with the arrangement of objects in her current home. This entailed changing the cushion covers in the salon to reflect the seasons – thicker, velvety fabrics for winter, and lighter, easier to wash cotton for summer. The month of Ramadan also spurred interior rearrangements such as moving the TV into the foyer so that Amina could watch her favourite Turkish soap opera while preparing the meal for breaking the fast. On several occasions, Amina confessed that she saw these exercises in re-decoration as a way of

[186] In her semiotic analysis of visual culture in Casablanca, Susan Ossman refers to Alpha 55 in the late 1980s as an "impure mix of people, cultural forms, and objects" (1994: 43-45). At the time of my research the store no longer resembled Ossman's description, being firmly situated within the city's ecology of up-scale, western-style consumer spaces. Future studies on the transformation of Casablanca's stratified shopping scene might reveal meaningful insights into local consumption patterns.

[187] Kitea is a Moroccan take on the Ikea furniture store, specializing in furniture sets and displays that mirror the Swedish brand's model. Price-wise, Kitea items are generally higher than similar items offered by Ikea, and of poorer quality. The modern aesthetic is thought by many to be worth the price alone.

testing ideas for her future dream home. However, most of the improvements she envisioned, such as a new refrigerator or an entryway mirror, were saved for implementation in the new apartment. Similarly, any new purchase was justified as an investment in the future dwelling. Most of these smaller purchases were made during visits to the street markets in the working-class areas neighbouring Hay Mohammadi. One day, as we were browsing through the crowded abundance provided by sidewalk vendors in one of the city's oldest market districts, Derb Soltane, Amina stopped to ask for the price of a large tea-serving tray. Displayed on the pavement alongside other kitchenware, the tray's box claimed it was made in "Manshester, England" (sic). The seller demanded 200 dirhams (roughly £ 15), and Amina bargained him down to 150. Placing her purchase in a bag, and smiling at me, Amina said: "It's for the new home. It's not wasteful."

Amina's manner of selectively choosing and integrating elements of the home visions the media presented her with into a personal idea of her future home is by no means novel. Similar to the findings reported by researchers working on the appropriation of material culture in England (cf. Miller 1995, Clarke 1998), Amina's selective investment in certain household objects as a way of assembling her ideal home was underpinned by her practice of 'window shopping' as a way to accumulate knowledge and a particular form of cultural capital. By staying in touch with the 'contemporary' trends in home furnishing, but ultimately being able to adapt them to her own budget and tastes, Amina's ways of engaging with the visions circulated in the media ultimately allowed her to feel empowered. Re-iterating the idea of the *hadga* woman discussed in the previous chapter, in the process of assembling her future home Amina saw herself as a savvy consumer, using her limited resources to achieve the kind of material effect she associated with an upper-middle-class 'modern' household. Nevertheless, this did not mean that she fully embraced the secular-infused visions from which she drew inspiration.

On a different occasion, after returning from a visit to her relatives in the north of Morocco, Amina showed me a blanket she had bought. That same day I had given her a set of curtains as a gift, and we both marvelled at how our purchases matched perfectly without having coordinated in advance. Amina unrolled the blanket for me to see, and we both appreciated its deep crimson amplified by the soft fleece texture. "I will save it for *le lit* (the bed) in the new home," Amina specified. Having spent the night over at her place many times, I knew that at that time and throughout her life, Amina, like many working-class Moroccans, had been sleeping on the low sofa cushions that lined her small salon. A

bed seemed like an improvement in terms of comfort, so I asked her if she was going to buy one. Hesitating, she said: "Well, I would. I might buy a *click-clack* (futon) instead, because, you know, I can't really buy a bed." As it was clear to her that I was not catching the sense of her words she continued: "If my relatives were to ever visit me in the new home they would think it's *heshuma* (shameful), an unmarried woman with a bed! They would think I'm having an affair with a man, doing bad things. So maybe I'll buy a *click-clack*; I can use it as a bed by night and a sofa by day."

Amina's statement caused me to pause and reflect on a moral dimension of home-making I had neglected or simply taken for granted until that point. Upon further reflection, I realized that financial means were not the only factor in deciding a home move or even furnishing choices for working-class families. A combination of ideas about morally appropriate behaviour as manifested through furnishing choices, coupled with a lack of physical space, meant that most families of modest means used the salon for sleeping. Furthermore, when extra rooms existed they were often much smaller than the salon. Furnished in a similar manner, with long, hard cushions lining the walls, they ensured an efficient use of limited space, often accommodating up to five people during the night, but allowing for little of what a Western understanding of intimate, personal space might entail. Indeed, for many working-class families a bed was synonymous with the act of setting up a family, and I seldom encountered households in Hay Mohammadi where children, young or old, had their own bed. Conversely, in middle and upper-class homes and apartments I visited in Casablanca and other cities, children would frequently have their own room, decorated after the latest fashion one could find in furniture store displays or in television commercials. I was also acquainted with a number of upper-class Moroccan women who worked and lived alone in Casablanca, and who did not seem to share Amina's concerns about owning a bed, let alone an entire apartment.

Amina eventually decided to visit some of the new housing projects built at the end of the tramway line in the neighbourhood of Annasi. One of her *derb* neighbours had moved to the area to escape the stifling presence of his in-laws, and he was going to show Amina his family's apartment as well as the neighbourhood. A taxi driver by profession, Mohammad, came to pick us up one Saturday morning in the small red Fiat he drove for work. Fifteen minutes later we were driving past recently built apartment blocks surrounded by dusty, grassless patches waiting to be covered by sidewalk pavement. The whole area had something of a frontier air about it. Beyond the buildings large empty

fields stretched into the distance. A mosque was under construction, and a cluster of small shops spilled out of the ground floor of the building nearest the tram terminus. Upon arrival, we first visited the showroom of the real estate agency, where Amina was given some basic information about the cost of a 48 square meter apartment and the availability in the coming months. Unfortunately, Amina would have to wait for the next phase of development, the representative told her, since all the current housing had been sold out. "There's a great demand. We can hardly keep up!" said the sales representative.

We then visited Mohammad's home, where his wife and three young children greeted us in a sunny, pastel coloured salon on the fourth floor of an apartment building similar to the one we had just visited. Showing us around their two-bedroom home, Mohammad and his wife pointed out some of the things they were dissatisfied with, which were mainly related to the poor workmanship and the minuscule bathroom space. Overall, however, Zineb, Mohammad's wife, told us as we stood in the children's bedroom, this was a proper place to live in. Her younger sister had recently married and shared a room with her husband and his younger siblings. "That's just *heshuma* (shameful)! A young couple, sleeping next to others!", she exclaimed waiting to see if I had understood the sense of her words.

As Sally Booth remarks in her study of gender and space in "new Sicilian housing", gender and moral norms are often negotiated and articulated through the inhabiting of new homes (1999: 150). If Amina worried about the moral propriety of buying a particular piece of furnishing, Booth's interlocutor was unable to live independently from her father because "her potential sexual freedom" would negatively impact her honour. The emergence and sustaining of what Arthur Kleinman (1991) has called "local moral worlds" functions by way of producing particular scales of values and prescribed behaviours, which are considered either right or wrong. In the instance illustrated by Amina's predicament and echoed in Sally Booth's ethnography, these values are embedded in the local social worlds of Mediterranean societies. Separately, they draw on conservative religious traditions that prescribe appropriate behaviours for the members of their respective societies, with the aim of maintaining a certain social order in place. However, while acknowledging the structuring power of such local moral worlds on individual actors' behaviours, I am also cautious about suggesting Amina's actions were solely motivated by and explained through the return to traditionalist moral norms. Instead, I would argue that Amina's case illustrates how for those in a precarious position

like herself, the ability to appeal to a local moral order functioned as an anchor against the contingency of everyday life and provided her with the mooring that Cresswell argues is necessary for sustaining mobility (2010: 18). Furthermore, in this way, ideas about morality and the material culture of the home were intricately linked with, and co-productive of social distinctions, since, as I mentioned earlier, young women from wealthier backgrounds did not feel the need to abide by similar rules.

Social status was therefore also woven into the process of self-consciously fashioning one's future. This process was heavily influenced by judgements of taste and morality associated with place of residence in Casablanca (cf. Salamandra 2004, Zhang 2010). Although never expressed in such outright terms, the voluntary relocation away from Hay Mohammadi was seen by many as an opportunity to improve one's social milieu. Density and the professional occupation of neighbours became two of the factors that were used to judge the desirability of a new locale. Standing in my kitchen on a Sunday afternoon in May 2013, Amina and Asma were discussing potential neighbourhoods where Amina might buy an apartment. Asma insisted that Amina look into a new housing development in the Ain Sebaa area: "Because you know what kind of people live there? There is a doctor on the floor below you and a lawyer in the apartment next to you. Good, quality people, not just anyone. You will have maximum eight families in the building. A proper, *sahih* (healthy) atmosphere."

Through such conversations and negotiations of what "proper moral" lives should look like and where they should be anchored in both the physical as well as the social topography of Casablanca, ideas about social mobility became increasingly linked to relocation away from the dense, overcrowded spaces of Hay Mohammadi.

Visions for the new urban margins

As unusual as Amina's situation was, in 2013 self-described pious, veiled, un-married women as independent homeowners and homebuyers were by no means atypical in the urban real estate market in Morocco. What was striking, however, was their complete absence from the images employed by a growing advertising industry to promote and sell not only a booming real estate stock, but also the image of 'modern Morocco' as Asma, poignantly, observed to me one day as we were strolling along one of Casablanca's main arteries, advertising panels above our heads. The new dreams, desires, tastes and dispositions manufactured by housing advertisements throughout the country and in

Casablanca in particular, were defining the aspirations and image of the Moroccan middle class. These invariably glossy, airbrushed pictures of young families typically portrayed a couple with one or two children, light skinned, dressed in western clothing, and sporting beaming smiles, while sitting on perfectly mowed lawns or inside homes decorated in a style one might call uniform globalism (Crinson 2003). The image in Figure 19 captures some of the prevalent themes encountered in these depictions. In these ads women never wore headscarves, although they were for the most part dressed in relatively modest attire. Linked to the idea of Western life-styles, these images tried to sell more than just real estate (cf. Zhang 2010). The promise they seemed to offer was that of prestige, social distinction and membership as part of a class of powerful consumers, all wrapped in a feeling of complete serenity.

Figure 19. Example of advertising image commonly used to depict the prospect of a prosperous, middle-class life as a home-owning family. Source: Al Omrane Public Housing Agency.

Although these images seemed to float in a carefully curated void, they were part of a much wider regime of production and dissemination, encompassing home decoration magazines and TV programmes, cooking shows, and advertisements for household products. In this section I argue that the sector formed by these artefacts represented the wishing well from which Moroccans assembled their ideal homes, and by extension dream lives (cf. Zhang 2010). Within this new regime of manufacturing ideal and idyllic images

of home, Ramadan TV shows played an interesting part. During the holy month of 2013, I spent many evenings watching TV alongside the people who had invited me to break the fast with them. Although there were several channels running special Ramadan programmes, most of the families I visited preferred to watch one of the two Moroccan state channels: 2M or Medi1. Right after broadcasting the call to prayer each channel would launch into an average of ten minutes dedicated to food advertisements. These would be followed in sequence by a series of Moroccan productions such as *Camera Caché* (candid camera), *Dour Biha Ya Chibani*,[188] and *Bnat Lalla Menana*.[189] This generally signalled the end of the *ftour* meal, and most people would then either switch off the TV or turn their attention away. While many of my friends expressed discontent with the quality of the programmes, they nevertheless continued to watch night after night, laughing at what they told me were mediocre jokes, and eventually memorizing the theme songs.

While several of the drama shows, such as *Banat Lalla Menana*, were anchored in domestic settings and touched on property or inheritance disputes, a comedy show titled *Darna* built its narrative around the humour and conflicts generated by two families forced to share a patio house in a generic Moroccan town. The humour relied heavily on the exaggerated differences between the enacted dispositions and behaviours of the two families. In one episode, the two families are forced to have dinner at the same time in an open common room. One family sits on chairs at a table and eats with forks and knives from individual plates, while the others sit on a low couch around a typical wooden table and eat with their hands from a communal dish. In this particular tableau, modes of eating do not only stand for modern and traditional, or for civilized and backwards, but rather for upper and lower class, and the role played by domestic rituals in creating social difference. While those who ate with their hands are depicted as inferior for their lack of decorum, the show's creators equally mocked the 'modern' family as they were soon exposed for their lack of skill in handling the cutlery. As such, the message of the series and of the episode in particular was not necessarily that of prescribing desirable modern behaviours, but

[188] Titled after a popular Algerian marriage song, this Moroccan series followed the destiny of an urban, upper-middle-class family in Casablanca as the father's decision to take a second wife unsettles their comfortable lives.

[189] Based on a theatre play by the same name, this TV series had been one of the most popular shows aired on Moroccan TV since 2012. Communications experts claimed this was partly because darija shows normally tend to record at least a 50 per cent audience and with the constraints placed by the Egyptian and Syrian turmoil on the film industry, Moroccan shows were said to be taking advantage.

appeared to reveal the competing aspirations and ambivalent feelings urban Moroccans have vis-à-vis 'modern' models put forth in the media.

Loan advertisements and home-financing options also formed a substantial part of the visions presented to those who aspired to be part of the city's future. Within this context, the ability to discern between credit options and to operate as a knowledgeable consumer faced with the striking diversity of Casablanca's banking landscape was also construed as part and parcel of the desirable identity of the modern urban citizen. Large banners advertising advantageous housing loan schemes for young families (Fig. 20), or flyers such as the ones Amina began to collect, all espoused the language of the rational and educated family of consumers travelling along the path to achieving middle-class status in Moroccan urban society.

Figure 20. This ad from bank BMCI, asks in the voice of their prospective housing loans clients: "What age must we be in order to finally be taken seriously?"

To Amina's chagrin, her older sister could not be swayed to lend her the money for the down payment, which meant that she had to resort to a bank loan. A pragmatic consumer, Amina spent several weeks investigating her options, using her lunch breaks to travel downtown and discuss loan options with various bank clerks. Her mission was somewhat aided by the fact that all of the major Moroccan banks could be found along the same grand boulevard, their imposing façades and monumental presence overshadowing

public institutions and strongly marking the city's identity as the country's financial hub. The paperwork and pamphlets she was given soon started to coat part of Amina's salon cushions. Manila folders she tried to keep track of had been labelled with large hand written letters hinting at their contents. "See how organised I am?" she joked with me as she was browsing through the amassed paperwork that documented every step of her bureaucratic journey towards owning an apartment. None of the papers in Amina's possession, however, came directly from a government institution.[190] Although her loan was guaranteed by the state through a subsidy programme, the bank that managed it was privately owned by an international financial group, while the property titles she would eventually own for her flat were issued by a public-private housing agency, whose public part was owned not by the government but by the King himself.[191]

The Moroccan state's role in facilitating home ownership as well as profitmaking for the real estate market requires some explanation. Owning a home has become increasingly difficult, reflecting the experience of many people worldwide. Housing bubbles and real estate markets in the post-economic crisis world have become increasingly volatile. In Morocco formal housing initiatives have historically lagged due to a number of "bottlenecks", as the World Bank describes such factors as corruption, problems with land titling, expensive building permits and contradictory urban planning regulations.[192] In order to address these bottlenecks, and under the pressure of growing demand for new affordable urban housing, the Moroccan state has devised several instruments for producing a highly profitable market (Le Blanc 2005). The most visible and active of these instruments have been the new private-public partnerships, which led to a series of housing agencies operating across Morocco. Together with a number of local and international banks, these agencies have come to dominate the affordable housing market in Morocco. In the process of purchasing her home, Amina's relation to the state in its traditional understanding was therefore primarily inscribed by her contract with private financing institutions and a public-private developer.

[190] For an example of what a broader study of the "materiality of signification" can contribute to our investigations of the state see Mathew Hull's insightful and intriguing work in *Government of Paper* and his argument that bureaucratic artefacts are a kind of semiotic technology (2012).
[191] Alliance Darna, the housing agency that built, managed and sold the housing stock from which Amina was buying her flat, was owned at the time partly by a group of foreign investors and partly by the Moroccan King's Company ONA.
[192] These bottlenecks were described and analysed as part of a study published by the Moroccan Ministry for Housing and sponsored by an assistance programme from the World Bank (PLURAM-ALGOE-PROMOCONSULT 2000).

While the stated objective behind the creation of a more diverse and inclusive financing landscape has been to reach those who live outside the formal economic and labour market, the implications this has had on the measure of one's participation in society has been dramatic. In other words, debt and the ability to become included into frameworks of debt extraction have increasingly come to define normative relationships between individuals and society (cf. Han 2012). During a conversation with Asma in the fall of 2013, she complained to me about the scale this phenomenon was reaching in Morocco.

> "Nowadays, if you don't have a *crédit* (loan), *nta machi 'adi* (you are not considered normal). Khalid's work friends keep pressuring us into taking out a loan for a new house, but we want to wait and save our money. They, on the other hand, have a loan for a car, a loan for the house, a loan for household appliances…. It's madness! I would not be able to sleep at night, but everyone does it now."

Similarly, Amina also opted for a minimum loan to cover the first instalment for her apartment, hoping to be able to accumulate the rest through personal savings and the help of traditional savings groups. For her part, Hind told me that her family had been compelled to take out a micro-credit loan to pay for their relocation to Lahraouiyine, and as the main income-earner in a family of four she often worried about the ability to keep up with the payments. Billboard across the city, however, seemed to suggest that participation in the debt economy was not only a normal and risk-free thing, but also an important step in the aspirational vision towards serenity and middle-class membership.

In her work on the sub-prime mortgage crisis in America, Noelle Stout has argued that such mechanisms for the financing of affordable housing can amount to new "predatory forms of debt extraction" (forthcoming). Her research on the increasing financialization of housing lead her to argue that nowadays, vulnerable populations are no longer exploited for their labour but for their ability to become indebted. Stout shows that lenders and real-estate developers also profited from the conversion of "enduring aspirations for mobility and security through home ownership" into loans that proved untenable to the debtors (2016). While she is careful not to dismiss her research participants' consumer intelligence, she points out that lending practices have become more opaque in revealing associated risks and delayed costs. In the case of the VSB programme in Morocco, Bogaert argues that the new financing mechanisms have yet to demonstrate whether they service the poor on fair and just terms (2011: 52), or whether

they constitute a new form of exploitation through the extraction of "poverty capital" (Roy 2010: 31).

What is worth noting, though, is that – similar to its position in the production of new housing – by delegating and quietly endorsing the production of a normative representation of desirable social status to the media and financial and real estate industries, the Moroccan state increasingly obscured its role in the process (and profits) of these social projections. Nevertheless, the model of the nuclear, consumer family appealed to both ideas about national progress as well as to those striving to achieve upward mobility on the social ladder. As Asma's words suggested, membership in Moroccan society could be seen to be shifting towards a consumer-based model (guaranteed by participation in real-estate and retail markets) that was also slowly changing the parameters according to which not only personal wellbeing and success, but also citizenship and belonging to the community could be measured. At the same time, this strategy was significantly redefining the boundaries of future aspirations for ordinary Moroccans and called for a reworking of the model according to which the state and its citizens interacted. In other words, mirroring the situation of the *karyane* dwellers, those who pursued the dream of an affordable home became part of a market-based system in which the state's power remained present but ambiguously defined (Bogaert 2011). As the inhabitants of the margins were further displaced or willingly relocated, the state could also be said to be relocating its presence into the more complex and diffuse realm of finance and real-estate.

Mobilities, leisure and non-places of the future

While many of the promises that canvased Casablanca's urban landscape were considered elusive at best – even by some of its more affluent inhabitants – it has to be mentioned that alongside utopian visions for the future completed projects also existed (Abrams and Weszkalnys 2013). Although few, they seemed to vouch for those projects still in the planning phase. One example was the Morocco Mall opened to great acclaim with a performance by the American singer Jennifer Lopez in 2011, while another was the tramway inaugurated in December 2012, linking the Mall to some of the poorest areas in Casablanca (Fig. 21). In this final section, I consider the role of the tramway as a flagship project for modern mobility, and explore its physical as well as discursive link to spaces of leisure and conspicuous consumption such as the Mall. In Chapter 3 I argued that a capitalist ideology was visible in the strategies used by the authorities and Casablanca's

elites to stigmatize un-profitable leisure activities by labelling them as loitering. Here, I consider the other option allowed by the same ideology, which entailed literally channelling leisure from the impoverished margins to the profit-making spaces of the Mall and the beach *Corniche*, via the hypermodern transit space of the tramway. By showing how conspicuous consumption framed the way in which physical mobility was ultimately linked to ideas of social mobility, I suggest that social transformation on Casablanca's margins was strongly linked to model of future development strongly influenced by a capitalist logic.

Figure 21. The new tramway, passing through a *sha'abi* neighbourhood in Casablanca, October 2013. Photo by the author**.**

If the global development of transportation networks has been closely associated with the "compression of space-time" as a hallmark of the modern age (Virilio 1986), the inauguration of Casablanca's first tramway line in December 2012 seemed to bring along a slowing of pace. In its first year, the tramway moved at a crawl for fear of the high rate of casualties that a normal operating speed would entail, and brought into relief existing social distinctions.[193] As such, the tramway serves as a fascinating example of the projects of hypermodernity that not only did not displace already existing technologies of

[193] There were still a significant number of minor as well as fatal casualties during the first twelve months of operation. The figures offered by the representative of the tramway's managing company, Casatramway, during an interview in October 2013, placed this number at 12, slightly below the international average.

transport, as I will show, but also became a space of 'intimate alienation', where new social practices emerged through the collective practices of anonymous Casablancans. Following from this, I will argue that contrary to what Marc Augé has written about the "non-places of supermodernity" (1995), the Casablanca tramway quickly became a "moving place" with its own social practices anchored by a specific history of local transportation and unofficial narratives. As a new, clean and safe, if not fast, means of transport, the tramway became much more than just a new way of travelling in the city. Standing in for a foretaste of what the future would hold for Casablancans, the tramway's apparent success, as I will show, also re-enforced existing social fragmentation and complicated state-supported discourses about aspirations of social mobility.

In the publicly available documents outlining the decision to invest in the development of a tramway network for Casablanca, the words "*intégration sociale*" appear multiple times (CASATRAM 2013). Although the primary motivations cited remained concerned with easing traffic congestion and upgrading existing infrastructure, the planners had not neglected the evident need of grappling with the city's growing social fragmentation (see Chapter 1). This preoccupation with using the development and implementation of a 'modern' transport network to create a more "socially integrated" city was repeated by the public relations representative of the tramway's managing company during a formal interview I had arranged in late 2013. From the outset, I was told, the planners had wanted to take advantage of this opportunity to connect the "disadvantaged areas of the city" to the more affluent parts on the Ain Diab beachfront – where the Morocco Mall as well as other upscale hotels and shopping establishments are located – but also "to hospitals, public administration and schools." In fact, during the later phases of the planning, I was told, the extension that brought the tramway to the main University campus in Casablanca's southwest had been added to the original plans as another way of providing a social service to the city's many university students. But as several young informants from Hay Mohammadi told me – such as Sara N. (Chapter 2), Safia (Chapter 3) or Marwane, one of Asma's nephews who was a second year biology student – the trip took much longer by tramway and service frequency was quite low (a tramway every 20 minutes). According to these young interlocutors' views this meant that they and their friends remained faithful to the much quicker way of using a shared taxi to get to their courses.

Because of these limitations, during the first twelve months of its operation, the tramway seemed to be ostensibly treated by the city's inhabitants with a mix of awe and annoyance. Although heavily subsidized through both public and private funding, the price of a tramway ticket remained out of reach for many of the citizens it was meant to serve. Overwhelmingly, my informants from Hay Mohammadi who rode on the tramway seemed to do so on weekends, in order to go to the beach in Ain Diab. As a consequence, during this early stage, the tramway seemed to be considered more of an attraction, in the way one might regard a new ride at a carnival, rather than an everyday means of transport. This sense of preciousness rather than ordinariness demonstrated the affective power of such flagship infrastructure projects. As historian of Dutch colonial Indonesia, Rudolf Mrázek (2002) argues, infrastructures can function on multiple levels, stimulating emotions of desire and pride, or working to visually prefigure the future. This should not be taken to mean that the tramway's effectiveness as a technological object was necessarily diminished. As Brian Larkin has showed, infrastructures, particularly those that promote physical mobility, have a long and sedimented history linked to ideas of 'civilizational progress' (2013: 332). As such, a great deal of their power rests in their ability to produce enthusiasm and feelings of future promise (cf. Archambault 2012). Although over the course of the fifteen months I spent in Casablanca user numbers increased considerably, the tramway retained traces of this aura, predominantly for my informants from Hay Mohammadi. I will therefore now turn to a discussion of how the tramway was used and perceived by those on the margins, and its place within the constellation of means used for everyday mobility.

From my previous experience of living and working in Morocco, I was accustomed to traveling by bus or by shared taxi. However, arriving in Casablanca for my fieldwork a month after the opening of the tramway line, I decided to test its convenience for travelling to and from Hay Mohammadi as well as other places. Comparing the corporeal experience of traveling through Casablanca in these different ways threw the tramway's mission of socially integrating the city into a different light. After having used the local bus from Hay Mohammadi to get into downtown Casablanca several times and experiencing almost as many attempts by pickpockets on my mostly empty backpack, I was seriously admonished by my closest informants. Sitting with Asma after one such incident in her mother's home near the Kissaria at the core of Hay Mohammadi (see Chapter 2 and 3), she asked me not to take the bus anymore, and instead use either the

shared taxis or the tramway, because the bus was simply not safe. Recounting stories about her university days, when she regularly used the bus line serviced by the stop in front of her building, she insisted that buses were no longer a safe or clean way to travel. Not only that, but for pious women, or any women at all, Asma went on to tell me, travelling on an overcrowded bus meant exposing oneself to a variety of forms of harassment. In a shared taxi, she explained, people tended to respect women more, by offering them the front seat or seating women together. Ending on a light note Asma said: "Nevertheless, given how crowded these shared rides are, you can understand why they are also sometimes called the 'love taxis' (*taxi al-hub*)!"

Women were not alone in their apprehension towards the myriad threats and corporeal vulnerabilities of using public transport in Casablanca. Several of my male informants also stressed the need to stay vigilant if I chose to travel by bus, offering personal examples of instances when they had been aggressed on public transport. As a consequence, when the tramway's managing company announced that policemen would ride in and patrol the tramway cars on a daily basis during the first six months after its inauguration,[194] it was not surprising to see the unanimous public support with which this decision was received. During a conversation we were having over dinner, Asma and her husband further pointed out how this decision set the Casablanca tramway apart from its counterpart in Rabat, Morocco's capital, where a similar tramway network had been introduced in 2011. Indeed, many of my interlocutors from Casablanca found the difference in security measures between the two cities telling. While the tramway in Rabat serviced open platforms where travellers could simply walk across in order to change travel directions, and tickets only had to be validated once inside the tramway, the spaces of the Casablanca tramway were by comparison intensely regulated and policed even before the introduction of plain-clothes officers. As such, in order to gain access to the tramway platforms one had to pass through turnstiles installed at each platform, which also served as the point of ticket validation. Walking across the rails in order to switch trains was not only discouraged but also physically prohibited by security agents who were equipped with whistles and a strong sense of duty. Entrances and exits were strictly labelled, directing the flow of passengers on and off the platform, and a second pair of

[194] According to the tramway spokesperson I interviewed, this was part of an officially signed agreement with the local police department in Casablanca, which was later extended to a whole year. Nevertheless, upon the completion of my fieldwork, fifteen months after the initial announcement, policemen were still patrolling the tramway. See http://ibergag.com/tramway-de-casablanca-200-policiers-pour-assurer-la-securite-du-transport/

tramway agents announced the arrival and departure of each tramway train with loud whistle blows as a way of socializing pedestrians into traffic vigilance. The tramway's managing company ostensibly presented these measures as a way of minimizing disruptions as well as casualties, and a necessary step in "educating" Casablancans about the proper ways of employing this new means of transport, as company spokesperson told me in a formal interview. Conversely, nobody had deemed such measures necessary in Rabat. Asma and her husband believed this was because the authorities considered Rabatis to be more modern and "civilized", while the great majority of Casablancans were regarded as "uneducated '*aroubiyin*" (rural, peasants).

The physical barriers were amplified by the confusing indications used to signal where tickets could be purchased, how the tickets should be validated, and where one was allowed to exit or enter. Such policing tactics overwhelmingly singled out those passengers who came from lower-class backgrounds and the less literate, thus re-enforcing the very stereotypes that were thought to legitimate this policing. On several occasions I witnessed tearful exchanges as mothers with prams were trapped in the turnstiles and the machines invalidated their tickets due to a handling error, or elderly women were prohibited from crossing to the opposite platform and instead forced to walk the length of two blocks in order to use the designated 'entrance' turnstiles at the end of the platform. Meanwhile, those who came from educated upper-middle-class backgrounds were visibly more adept at seamlessly navigating and adapting to the tramway's confusing rules, becoming well versed in the particular corporeal literacy that it demanded of its users. In fact, some of the most fruitful analyses in the anthropology of infrastructure have focused on the ways in which modern infrastructures are not simply technical objects, but imply a different type of literacy or a whole set of competences to be learned (cf. Harvey 2010, Khan 2006, von Schnitzler 2008). As Tess Lea's and Paul Pholeros's (2010) work on Aboriginal housing in Australia has shown, this aspect is most often highlighted when governments, engineers, or local administrators and planners complain about the ignorance or inability of users to "learn" how to behave or to utilise the new technologies put at their disposal.

In the regional literature, Julia Elyachar's work on the intersection of political economy and bodily practice in Cairo (2012) has shown how the ability to be fluent in such corporeal forms of literacy and to participate in a local, political economy of gesture of Cairene public transport often function as a way of both evincing and reproducing the

social status of the persons engaging in specific forms of bodily practice, tramway navigation being one example (ibid: 90). By 'gesture', I am referring to a wide range of bodily movement, as well as an awareness of what to do with one's body in the physical and social space of public transportation. Confronted with their corporeal and gestural illiteracy in the realm of the tramway, many of my informants from Hay Mohammadi confessed that when they needed to get somewhere they still chose the much faster and familiar means of the shared *grand taxi* or the bus. Echoing Elyachar's ethnographic observations, these *sha`abi* means of transport were equally suffused with and sustained by their own particular economy of gestures. Beyond the mere mastery of how one pays for one's ride, and the intricate choreography of pressed bodies on shared taxis, an entire sign language was used to signal to passing taxi drivers a desired destination. Early on in my fieldwork, Asma had tried to teach me this sign language as we stood by one of the main roads in Hay Mohammadi hoping to hail down a *grand taxi*. "This way the driver knows where you want to go and doesn't need to slow down and ask", Asma explained as I made a note of the different hand gestures she performed to signal various destinations in the vicinity of Hay Mohammadi. Being skilled in this rich and locally specific economy of gestures amounted to a certain degree of social capital in the environment of Casablanca's periphery, which the tramway's system of indication did not value.

By contrast, the tramway's use was overwhelmingly inscribed in the logic of leisure and consumption and to a much lesser degree regarded as efficient transportation, a fact that was made evident by how a majority of my closest informants approached this "moving space". Abdeljalil Bakkar, the president of the *jam'iyya* who was introduced in earlier chapters, told me that he had been planning on taking his young daughter to the Morocco Mall to see the aquarium there. They would make sure to stop by McDonald's for ice cream as well, even though, he insisted, he was generally opposed to frequenting such strongly consumerist places. Many of the youth, who were introduced in the previous chapters, also told me they used the tramway for weekend outings, because it was "a nice, classy way of going into town". On these occasions they would put on their best clothing and save their pocket money for going to a café, or to enjoy refreshments available on the promenade. Oftentimes, the space-time of the tramway ride also offered occasions for flirtatious interactions with peers, and the playful testing of social boundaries, leading to what I previously referred to as "intimate alienation". Specifically, while the physical

space of the tram remained an intensely sanitized and policed realm its users nevertheless were able to appropriate it and produce new forms of social interaction.

As my relationship to Amina developed over the course of my fieldwork, we also created a routine of going to the beach *Corniche* in Ain Diab every other Sunday. Similar to hundreds of other Casablancans from places like Hay Mohammadi, we embarked on the tramway early in the day in order to be able to find a seat for the long ride, and settled in for the fifty-minute trip to the end of the line in Ain Diab. As we stepped out of the soundproofed capsule that had smoothly delivered us there, we were greeted by the shimmering blue ocean framed by swaying palm trees and overflowing bougainvillea of the neighbourhood villas. The tramway's terminus sat at a perpendicular angle to the wide, car-jammed boulevard running along the length of the *Corniche*, but the planners had failed to install a signalled crosswalk for pedestrians. As a consequence, those who arrived by tramway had to wait for a halt in the flow of traffic in order to attempt crossing the road. Mothers with prams had to make a dash for the other side while cars swerved around them, angry horns filling the air.

Amina and several of my other informants from Hay Mohammadi saw this planning failure as typical of the type of shoddy workmanship they had grown accustomed to from the city's authorities. A different, perhaps unintended consequence of this situation, was that it underscored the socio-economic difference between those who arrived in packed tramway cars at the beach on Sundays, and those who angrily blared their horns at them from their private automobiles. This impression was further confirmed by some of my upper-middle-class interlocutors, who were in the habit of driving to the beach on weekends and claimed that since the tramway's opening the *Corniche* had been flooded with people who "clogged up the traffic" and made the area more "*populaire*" (classless, common). The mobility and proximity of social 'others' was perceived as disturbing to the taken-for-granted social order (McCallum 2015), and suggested the presence of a tacit struggle over not only material but also cultural resources, such as the prestige of frequenting a previously exclusive area like the *Corniche.* These reactions demonstrate that, while large infrastructure projects can be used to bolster state power (Harvey and Knox 2012, Limbert 2010, Mains 2012), it is often difficult to predict the political effects and social affect they will trigger in the local population. As Brian Larkin has argued, such projects can "generate complicated emotional investments" and "counterintuitive responses", essentially demonstrating the "unruly" character of

infrastructure (2013: 334). At the same time, it is important to note that reactions that deplored the area's 'popularisation' essentially fed upon the same social anxieties that lent power to urban myths such as that of the 'millionaire *karyane* dweller' mentioned earlier. Such anxieties seemed to hint at the fragility of the 'middle-class dream' that canvased the city's billboards, while at the same time underscoring the dramatic spatialization of class that has occurred in the past decades throughout the city.

Conclusion

Homes and imaginaries about home-making as a crucial form of place-making are central to the future as much as they are to the present. They function as what Cresswell (2010) and Ingold (2004) point to as the necessary moorings of a growingly mobile, and I would add, contingent sense of being in the world. As the home biography of Hind detailed, however, home-making can also include the repeated *un*making of home, be it due to family disputes or state interventions aimed at sanitizing and ordering the urban margins. In order to understand where this world might be heading for the inhabitants of Hay Mohammadi, in this chapter I focused my attention on the pervasive scopic regime that canvased everyday life on the streets of Casablanca and sometimes entered the domestic realm via television and radio. Furthermore, I have suggested that the same images can offer a glimpse into how dominant state discourses envisioned not only the future look of the city's built fabric but also the type of upward social 'mobility' it desired to promote among its citizens. Conversely, the presence of the state on Casablanca's margins was visibly and vividly embodied by the mushrooming of affordable housing and slum-relocation neighbourhoods which contrasted with the aspirational and futuristic shapes of the new tramway. However, as I have tried to show here and in preceding chapters, the inhabitants of Hay Mohammadi were highly skilful at appropriating and adapting such hegemonic visual discourses as a way of contesting their on-going marginalization and opening new spaces for dreaming of the future, be they real or imagined. As Ghassan Hage (2003: 20) points out, "societal hope, which is . . . about one's sense of the possibilities that life can offer, is not necessarily related to an income level. Its enemy is a sense of entrapment, of having nowhere to go, not a sense of poverty." As such, participation through a plurality of forms of 'mobilities' enabled my close interlocutors to aspire to better future lives that corresponded to local moral norms and ideals.

Drawing on my ethnographic material, I echo Hage's observation and argue that even for those who lacked the resources to attain these 'elusive promises', the ability to engage in similar forms of consumption and to appropriate these images became a significant means that allowed them to sustain hope and secure the future through the present. At the same time, it is important to acknowledge that, by tapping into this sense of societal aspiration, the local media and real-estate industries managed to produce new forms of debt extraction from the lower-classes. The full effects of this cannot yet be evaluated, but might point towards the emergence of new forms of exploitation and structural violence (cf. Stout 2015). This financialization of societal belonging – through the promotion of home-ownership and the inclusion into structures of debt creation – occurred alongside progressive projects such as the inauguration of the new tramway line.

The creation of this new transportation infrastructure, however, complicated official narratives about social inclusion by highlighting the growing chasm between the 'popular masses' of the city's growing periphery and those who were made anxious by their sudden proximity. I would argue that these anxieties speak towards the vulnerability of the 'mobility' model put forth by hegemonic (visual) discourses. Taken in the context of the city's wider transport infrastructure, the tramway line was seen by the managing company as well as various urban planners I spoke with as a purely technical solution to the pressing need of 'modernizing' public travel in Casablanca. This attitude echoed the approach of the *Cities without Slums* (VSB) programme, which regarded the presence of *bidonvilles* as a technical problem in need of a technical solution. Both programmes relied on a certain belief that a particular model of 'mobility' would become a motor for social integration if not advancement. I have also shown how participation in this model of 'mobility' was closely linked with ideas about educating a particular class of Casablancans about 'proper', 'modern' behaviours, echoing the technocratic approaches of Écochard's urban policies from the 1940s.

In this sense, paying attention to the ordinary reactions provoked by the tramway's inauguration, as well as the general misconceptions describing the VSB programme as a 'handout', can serve to illuminate not only how existing social divides remained salient, but also the capacity of infrastructure to effect "unwieldy" or unanticipated outcomes (Larkin 2008). While the tramway's mission had been to facilitate a more socially just urban landscape, the first signs of its success were met with apprehension by those who had worked hard to insulate themselves from the contact with the maligned lower classes.

The divisive reactions occasioned by these two state-led projects of ‘mobility’ suggest a complicated future in which, in spite of their perceived conflicts and incongruities, the inhabitants of Casablanca will have to work out their own vision of cohabitation.

Conclusion

In the spring of 2014, during the sporadic *Tcharmila* raids (Chapter 4), Amina told me that she had heard from an acquaintance that the local authorities were finalizing plans for the re-development of the *karyane*. Several of the larger dwellings facing the wide Ali Yaata avenue had been finally torn down, and the inhabitants of adjacent quarters speculated that the bulldozers would soon come to level the remaining debris. Amina asked if I had any information about what would be built on the site: "You've spoken with those people at the urban planning office. They probably tell you more than they would tell us. So, what do they say?" For almost three years after the launch of the *Cities without Slums* programme in the *karyane* at Hay Mohammadi, the official statement from the urban planning agency proposed that a park surrounded by artisanal workshops and stores, together with a vocational training centre, would replace the *karyane*. This plan had been publicised through newspaper articles in local media and had travelled by word of mouth in Hay Mohammadi. In 2014 this plan seemed to have been shelved, and, during a short interview, the architect that had won the re-development brief told me that he had received no conclusive decision from the local authorities. [195]

During a meeting with the urban planner heading the elaboration of the new plan for Hay Mohammadi (arranged with help from an architect friend), I posed Amina's question, but the answer received was evasive. At the time, the 'updated' plan regulating the future development of the neighbourhood still needed to be approved by the Interior Ministry, and there had been minimal public consultation regarding the plan's main provisions. The planner with whom I spoke was enthusiastic about the new plan, but stressed the hierarchical nature of the decision process: "Even if we proposed amendments to the plan, the officials in the Ministry can veto them, and once the plan is returned to us all decisions are final." The one aspect the planner was confident would remain in the document was the "valorisation" of neighbourhood space. Unsure that I had understood the technical meaning of the term in this context, I asked her to elaborate. "The new plan will allow for seven storey buildings, whereas at the moment the majority are no taller

[195] From an interview with Aziz Lazrak, March 2014. Aziz Lazrak was the head architect of the eponymous firm that had won the competition for the redevelopment of the *karyane* site. Considered one of the leading architects of his generation, Lazrak was honored in 1986 with the Aga Khan Prize for the Dar Lamane housing complex he had designed for the relocation of a section of *karyane* dwellers at the time.

than four [stories]." According to the planner, the new provisions would see the homes built on the base of Écochard's grid razed to the ground, making way for taller structures. Besides increasing the neighbourhood's already high density, the plan completely failed to take into account the much-needed upgrading of existing public spaces and derelict infrastructure. Those, it seemed, were regulated by another framework not contained under the provisions of the new plan. Significantly, the inhabitants were given little say in this much-awaited planning document.[196] Ironically, Amina's question seemed to not only anticipate the planner's response, but already contained in it the resigned scepticism of the inhabitants, who had become accustomed to the appearance of consultation that was never implemented.

This meeting – taking place towards the end of my fieldwork – encapsulated for me the nature of the relationship between the Moroccan state and the urban margins at the time. In spite of the frequently advocated participatory planning frameworks that were supposed to be central to programmes like *Cities without Slums* (VSB) and commemoration activities sponsored by the Moroccan Council for Human Rights, in everyday practice authorities remained inclined to perpetuate a top-down approach underpinned by a concern with economic profit and social control, demonstrating limited transparency and little interest in meaningful change. As the provision of the plan suggests, the state's approach towards struggling urban areas like Hay Mohammadi centred around a form of development that relied almost exclusively on real estate as a motor for economic growth and did little to implement the kind of participatory, deep structural reforms needed to revitalize the historically marginalized and impoverished community it had recognized through the Reconciliation Commission report (Chapter 1). Australian anthropologist Ghassan Hage's observations about the influence of advanced capitalism on the way the state relates to society seems pertinent here: "National and sub-national (such as State or provincial) governments all over the world are transformed from being primarily the managers of a national society to being the managers of the aesthetics of investment space" (2003:19). Cast in this light, the various commemorative and heritage efforts centred on the neighbourhood, together with the social development agendas enacted by local NGOs emerge as 'hollow' practices with regards to the lives and struggles of Hay Mohammadi's inhabitants (cf. Boutieri 2011).

[196] The planner in question told me that "the public had been consulted", as the proposed plan and its technical provisions had been pinned on the notice board of the main administrative office in Hay Mohammadi "for all to see".

This does not mean that they are intrinsically worthless, as I have tried to show in this dissertation, but rather that their ethos becomes devoid of any potential for meaningful and lasting impact as long as they are being appropriated by the state's hegemonic discourse. Furthermore, as events that occur sporadically in the neighbourhood's everyday life, they do little more than signal tokens of intervention with limited life spans and effects (Chapter 2). Compared to the everyday skills and routines developed and sustained by the ordinary inhabitants that have animated the pages of this dissertation, they do little to address the larger and incessant forces affecting the prospect of a better life for those living in Hay Mohammadi. Throughout this dissertation I have touched on the disjunction that this situation creates between the state and the urban margins, but it has not been squarely addressed until now. The justification for this is ethnographic, as I see the form and extent of this disconnect as a finding rather than a hypothesis. Consequently, I consider this finding to be the unexpected outcome of the varied interactions I observed between development agendas, the state, and ordinary inhabitants, rather than a systematically implemented strategy for marginalization. Nevertheless, as I have already suggested throughout the text, this disconnect is not limited to Hay Mohammadi, and should be seen as a consequence of the country's wider social and economic policies. As part of these policies, urban poverty and marginalization have been treated as technical problems in need of technical solutions (Chapter 6). As the 'new' urban plan for Hay Mohammadi also demonstrates, technical solutions elaborated thus far continue to omit the root causes of socio-economic marginalization. When these top-down approaches have failed or faltered, the inhabitants of the margins have been accused of being at fault, and the spatial practices they have devised in response to adversity have been vilified. These practices stand at the centre of my ethnography, because they constitute a form of agency that plays a critical role in both producing and sustaining present livelihoods, as well as hope and future wellbeing. I argue that these practices demonstrate the strong allegiance and belonging to a place and a community, even in the event of radical mobility (Chapter 6), suggesting that due to its history of utopian visions and devastating change a positive future transformation remains a possibility in the minds of the neighbourhood's inhabitants.

In the following section I review the main arguments of the dissertation and position them in conversation with existing anthropological theories of space/place and everyday practice, as well as inter-disciplinary debates on urban studies. In doing so, my

aim is to re-inscribe my discussion of marginalization within larger frameworks of analysis that concern the study of post-colonial cities and their future, and address the question of how we might approach a study of changing social formation in the context of Morocco, North Africa, and anthropology, more broadly.

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One of the goals of this dissertation was to argue that the poverty and marginalization of Hay Mohammadi has not occurred in a void. I began by showing the need for historicizing the production of urban marginality in Casablanca and positioning it within a continuum that accounts, and should be held accountable, for the root causes of the neighbourhood's ongoing dereliction and the criminalization of the working-class inhabitants living there (Chapter 1). In order to understand the deep roots of this marginalization and its attendant consequences, a re-evaluation of the continuities between the colonial and post-colonial state was illuminating. By looking at the timeline of events tracing Hay Mohammadi's history, it became evident that the post-colonial Moroccan state not only inherited the spatial organization and power mechanisms of the French, but improved upon the tools of urban control devised by colonial administrators, effectively perpetuating the fragmentation and inequality inscribed in the city's early planning, and upgrading former policing infrastructure into spaces of more efficient repression (Chapter 1). As such, one of the central claims of this dissertation is that the urban space of Casablanca's margins, and Hay Mohammadi in particular, should be considered neither a static representation of a particular ideology (be it French colonial or Moroccan), nor a benign medium through which politics was conducted (cf. Rabinow 1989, O'Neill 2009); but rather an active agent in the shaping of policies and local social geographies and imaginaries. This argument is rooted in the idea that space and place are both productive of and produced by social orders (Lefebvre 2005). Furthermore, it extends to the role of governance, which exists in a dialectical relationship to urban space, as the two mutually structure and reinforce one another (Lefebvre 2005, Soja 2000). My discussion of the post-colonial period and the abuses and excesses of the 'Years of Lead' and the 'Emergency Urbanism' era therefore provide striking examples of how city spaces become politicized in order to reinforce the logic and practices of a ruling regime, facilitating certain hierarchies and thereby effectively participating in the production of impoverished working-class, *sha'abi* spaces and identities.

Owing to this painful history of repression and torture, and the subsequent efforts

at commemorating that violence as well as 'restoring dignity' to the community, this historical background is all the more salient for understanding the conditions in which current inhabitants struggled to secure prosperous lives. My chapter on the politics of representation and commemoration of Hay Mohamamdi's memory and trauma revealed the selective preoccupation with specific categories of remembering and past experience, and the discarding of "less useful" histories (Allan 2013). This has led me to argue that official commemoration activities and their entanglement with architectural heritage agendas contributed to the reification of historical memory. By exploring the uses and trajectories of what Lefebvre has termed "representations of space" (1991) – in the forms of maps, plans, and a board game – I suggested that neighbourhood space was increasingly portrayed through reified tropes that had limited purchase in the lived reality of the neighbourhood. My critique further argued that these official narratives play a small role in the community's memory practices. Through a subjective mapping exercise, I brought to the fore the more mundane spaces and practices that sustain local remembrance and identity making. The stories that emerged from the personal maps drawn by my friends and interlocutors revealed a more complicated neighbourhood space, textured by the concerns associated with living in a socially and economically precarious environment, and reminiscent of what Cristina Grasseni has termed "skilled landscapes" of everyday life (2004).

This opposition between the official, elite, reified record and the mundane, pragmatic, resilient is both an edifying and an insufficient finding. While critiquing the performance of commemorative and heritage practices in Hay Mohammadi it also became apparent how crucial these activities were in securing international funding for local NGOs as well as publicity and positive attention from outside the community. Although the reification of colonial era planning documents and the commemorative map provided a limited and incomplete view of the neighbourhood, they facilitated struggles over authority and the right to tell the neighbourhood's story (Chapter 2). This dynamic was further complicated by NGO funding cycles and international structures of social development, ultimately revealing not only the ephemeral nature of official commemoration practices but also their productive uses for the community. In other words, what I have critiqued as the disconnect between official commemorative and heritage regimes and the history and memory that informs local everyday struggles, is also part of the complex landscape of forces that could be appropriated by inhabitants as part

of the savvy pragmatism of life that is required on the precarious margins. And of course, the main goal of this dissertation was to highlight and give proper consideration to the flexible and dexterous (if at times banal) everyday practices of survival developed by the inhabitants of Hay Mohammadi.

Starting with the third chapter, I analysed, through the prism of various scales of space, the significance of these mundane practices in relation to the production of livelihoods and of various forms of belonging. Drawing on the work of Henri Lefebvre again, I argued for the renewed need to grapple with the political significance of everyday practice in the context of the urban margins, as I believe it is the very time-space in which social distinctions and related forms of habitus are developed (Bourdieu 1987). As part of this preoccupation with everyday practices, one of my key observations is about the particular type of habitus they produce and its spatialization. Namely, from the constellation of practices that I identify as part of the vibrant street life of Hay Mohammadi, a particular type of social identity is congealed – what I refer to as the *sha'abi* character of space and the practices associated with it. As the ethnography shows, though, this *sha'abi* identity cuts two ways, working both as harmful stereotype and as flexible identity that can be tactically adopted, based on the social context in which the inhabitants found themselves. Stereotypical embodiments of this term stressed the chaos and dereliction of the urban margins and regarded them as the manifestation of the inhabitant's inability to 'fully adjust' to the demands of urban life, prompting the use of such tropes as 'the ruralization' of Casablanca's fabric. Used in a pejorative sense, the term, coined by Richard Stren in reference to African cities in the 1980s, has gained wide circulation in recent years, as popular media, local governments and international development discourses have used it to describe what they see as a particularly problematic form of urban degradation in the Global South (cf. Stren 1986, Polese and Stren 2000, Pereira 2014, Goodyear 2014). My argument in this dissertation has been that not only does talk of 'ruralization' serve as a way of 'othering' the inhabitants of already marginalized and impoverished neighbourhoods, but it also creates a false dichotomy between an opaque and static concept of 'urbanity' (*haddariyn)* and a constructed notion of the 'rural'.

I show, however, that disorder is an inaccurate characterisation of both physical spaces and living practices in Hay Mohammadi, and I argue that the apparent chaos of the urban margins is often a strategically deployed image in the hands of the authorities and

the media, revealing moral undertones to questions of how urban spaces should be used and lived in (Chapter 3). Not only were local officials aware of the internal order and self-regulated organization of street vendors, but they also admitted to dispensing permits to people suffering from various disabilities, recognizing at the same time the state's responsibility to care for its most vulnerable citizens while admitting its inability to do so within the framework of a welfare structure, and instead tacitly encouraging informalization. A number of studies on similar situations in Africa and South-East Asia have interpreted this as evidence of the apparent limits of the state's regulatory power (Bayart 1993, Reno 1995, Cooper 2002, Hibou 1998, Roitman 2005). Following the work of Mathew Hull in Pakistan (2012), I am more interested in how this situation was perceived by my interlocutors as evidence of the state's opportunistic interpretation of its mandate to regulate people and space. Thus, by silently endorsing certain forms of street occupation and commerce in certain places, the Moroccan authorities were seen to flexibly employ their mandate, which allowed them to consolidate and enact new rules in response to shifting contexts. The effect of this situation was a re-enforcing of what I have argued was the de-politicization and de-historicization of urban poverty.

The commemoration activities and heritage agendas romanticized the working-class roots of the neighbourhood, but stopped short of fleshing out the relationships between that history and the dereliction caused by subsequent political and economic decisions that disempowered the labour unions and watched over the de-industrialization of the neighbourhood. While historically the neighbourhood had been working-class and derived a considerable measure of pride from the awareness of this background, the vilification in recent decades of *sha'abi* spaces and the attendant forms of sociality that are coproduced by people and space need to be critically investigated. I show that the aversion towards Hay Mohammadi spaces, people, and their practices was circulated not only in the media but also through widespread rumours and stereotypical images, whose violent effects went beyond 'othering' through speech. Chapter 4 particularly captured the devastating effects of such moral panics and discussed another aspect of the disjuncture between state discourse and state practice. Through the close analysis of a youth development programme and the uses of Street Arts not only for social integration but also as part of internationally supported Islamic de-radicalisation campaigns, I interrogated the limits of this approach. These became acutely apparent during an episode of heightened and heavy policing of marginal youth I referred to as the *Tcharmila* raids, bringing into

question the Moroccan state's commitment to human rights agendas and social justice. A salient example of what Didier Fassin has termed "petty states of emergency", the mass arrests and police harassment of working-class youth during the *Tcharmila* episode raises crucial issues about the ethics and politics of new assemblages of power in Morocco, and call for further work on understanding their implications on life and its possibilities for the urban precariat (2014).

Moreover, the chapter's focus on the (a)politics of contestation and social development programmes in Hay Mohammadi critically interrogated the relationship between NGOs, international and national development actors and agendas. My examination demonstrated that while the state has become more difficult to ethnographically locate due recent efforts towards its decentralization, it has been re-territorializing its power through other channels. Based on the evidence presented in Chapter 4 and Chapter 6, I suggest that even disparate phenomena such as social development programmes and the promotion of real estate markets are profoundly linked to state intentions and activities (cf. Boutieri 2012). While this phenomenon is not novel, such re-assemblages of governance structures continue to be elided in the anthropological literature. A notable exception is Julia Elyachar's work in Cairo. Elyachar has compellingly illustrated this trend in *Markets of Dispossession* (2005), where she demonstrates how such efforts, driven by international development agendas, essentially further the nexus between state and capital, while having little impact in the lives of their proclaimed target populations.

Situated within these increasingly diffuse and opaque spheres of power and governance are the individual hopes and fears of the inhabitants. My concern throughout the chapters has been to not only provide a detailed account of my interlocutors' struggles, but also to clearly situate them within these spheres. The home as the expression of a proper life and the manifestation of the efforts that go into securing livelihoods becomes crucially significant for understanding the dynamics between history, urban space, and everyday practices, whose goal is achieving personal wellbeing (Chapter 5). Given the history of scholarly as well as popular depictions of domestic spaces in the Middle East and North Africa, another central preoccupation of this dissertation has been to complicate the relationship between public and private spaces. Feminist literature has largely spearheaded the thorough critique of the private/public divide, and the implications this has had on scholarly studies of domesticity (see Blunt and Dowling 2006, Marcus 1999).

Due to such crucial interventions, domestic space is no longer solely seen as a "place liberated from fear and anxiety, a place supposedly untouched by social, political and natural processes" (Kaika 2005: 52), but rather an ongoing process with connections to, and interactions with, the "outside world."

Similarly, the ethnography of domesticity I have assembled in this dissertation with the help of my closest informants – Amina and Asma – speaks of the complicated and ambivalent feelings attached to the domestic realm. It brings to the fore the importance of what – following Navaro-Yashin (2012) – I have called '*un*homely', and its coexistence with homeliness, as symptomatic of the living situations created by late-modernity. I insist on the fact that this un-homeliness is not a cultural superstition, but rather a manifestation of the vulnerability produced by larger scales of historical and economic forces that continue to impact life on the urban margins. As such, the *un*homely also stands testament to the porosity between constructed understandings of private and public, a fact illustrated by the ways in which Amina related the neighbourhood's historical trauma to the loss of her parents, the dereliction of her home and street, and also her own body beset by illness (Chapter 5). In order to 'pacify' and keep in check the particular affect of the *un*homely (cf. Navaro-Yashin 2012), a skilful mastery over everyday life and its attendant routines seemed necessary.

Furthermore, these skills and routines were not only representative of the daily effort needed in coping with precarity, but also signalled the development of a locally valuable form of social capital – what I have discussed under the concept of *hadga.* This illustrated the crucial link between domestic space, social practice and future aspiration, as the repertory of skills developed by Amina were highly determined by her socio-economic background and shaped her orientation towards the future: notably an aspiration for finding a good husband that would support her and value her abilities as a *hadga* woman. While I am cautious to not over-determine the power of this symbolic capital, this ethnographic finding resonates with similar examples from the regional literature, which suggest that depictions of the household unit as the domain of patriarchal oppression are limited and stereotypical. Specifically, Diane Singerman's and Homa Hoodfar's work in Cairo (1996) attested to the local logics and economic strategies inherent in household activities. Their analysis also revealed that work outside the home was often dis-empowering to lower-class women. Together with examples from the anthropology of Iranian households (Najmabadi 1998), this shows that contemporary domestic life in the

Middle East resists facile classifications. Moreover, in a context of constant economic precarity, house-space and domestic labour will remain crucial for economic survival.

Following from this, another key point of my thesis, illustrated in the final two chapters, is that securing livelihoods is an ongoing project for the inhabitants of Hay Mohammadi, entailing efforts in the present as well as the piece-meal realisation of future aspirations. I show that, increasingly, future aspirations entail not only desires of social mobility, but also longer commutes to work and geographical relocation. Like the delayed implementation of the *karyane*'s redevelopment, the promise of neighbourhood regeneration seemed to be eternally postponed. As a consequence, for those inhabitants of Hay Mohammadi who sought a better life, future well-being meant moving further towards the city's margins, a process that I refer to as the 'peripheralization of the margins'. I argue that this relocation is particularly affecting the inhabitants of impoverished, blighted urban areas, as rising real estate costs and neoliberal agendas supporting 'slum relocation' programmes push the working poor further towards the periphery. In this context, un-making homes becomes a central feature for those inhabiting the margins, and the housing biographies I presented in Chapter 6 attest to the repeated moves that precariousness engenders.

Mobility becomes inevitable for those who aspire for a better outlook both individually, and as a community. As a consequence, prosperity and the 'good life' are increasingly imagined as home ownership and material comfort. These rarely correspond to financial security, however, as a growing credit market suggests to those with little wealth that financial debt is the path towards becoming part of the middle class. Nevertheless, as Amina's skilful navigation of this landscape shows, some people did manage to pragmatically combine bank loans with participation in local rotating credit schemes, balancing the risk of debts in the official economy with the support of local networks based on trust and personal history and friendship (cf. Han 2012). At the same time, as the financing mechanisms behind public-private run programmes such as VSB and affordable housing demonstrate, there is a marked tendency to incorporate the working-poor into the expanding realm of traditional as well as micro-lending structures. As Koenraad Bogaert's work on 'new' state spaces in Morocco has showed (2011, 2012), this process comes to comprise both what Ananya Roy (2010) has referred to as "poverty capital", as well as David Harvey's concept of "accumulation through dispossession" (2004). As the Moroccan authorities continue their programme of housing development,

further research into the effects of this growing financialization will be required.

In this dissertation I have positioned the everyday politics and practices of inhabitants on the urban margins in relation to both material claims – evidenced by the ongoing struggle for securing livelihoods –, and processes of identity-making – as made apparent in the production and contestation of local cultural and moral worlds. My ethnography has shown that these processes, usually treated separately by both scholars and practitioners, are in fact deeply interwoven in everyday life. Significantly, my analysis has demonstrated that as hegemonic discourses and practices refused to meaningfully engage with the political and economic root-causes of marginalization and social fragmentation, they paradoxically worked to re-enforce local identities forged around practices developed in response to marginalization and the increasing economic insecurity it engendered. I have shown that not only do these aspects remain heavily circumscribed by international as well as national forces, but also that they are increasingly divorced from one another, helping to support what I have described as the disconnect between official discourse and the state's actions vis-à-vis the urban margins.

These findings raise further questions about the nature of this separation, the actors producing it and the impact this will have on future social transformation in Hay Mohammadi, Casablanca and Morocco more widely. As the new plan for Hay Mohammadi aims to remake the built fabric of the neighbourhood, will gentrification become a problem for inhabitants in the future? Recent and earlier historical trends of urban socio-spatial dynamics in Casablanca seem to disprove this hypothesis. As several of my interlocutors in Chapter 1 and 2 claimed, the tendency has been for a movement away from the city's north-eastern, densely populated working-class areas and towards the (until-recently) still rural, sparsely inhabited stretches of ocean-front land in the city's south-west. Another recent trend has been the growing presence and popularity of middle-class gated communities in similarly still lush, unaffected land, set at a remove from Casablanca's messy lower-class neighbourhoods. Together with projected and announced designs for a new 'financial district' and the reclaiming of land previously occupied by 'informal' settlements for the construction of high-end office and retail space, these visions of Casablanca announce a future of complicated socio-spatial assemblages, wherein traditional understandings of class fail to capture the dynamic and shifting ways in which social groups are formed and in turn give life to attendant identities.

Throughout this dissertation I have drawn on the ethnographic material provided by my closest informants to critically engage with the production of social inequality and social difference. Drawing on the theoretical work of Pierre Bourdieu, I have approached the notion of class as a set of shifting relations to locality, history, and the access to various types of socio-economic and symbolic forms of capital. This has not only been a methodological approach but a necessity, as the changing nature of capital requires an equally evolving formulation of class (cf. Dworkin 2007). In this sense, I see my study conversing with and adding to the contributions of fellow anthropologists who argue that a broadly formulated anthropological notion of class continues to be a useful explanatory concept of modern social thought (Carrier 2015, Kalb 2015). Such a notion combines anthropological approaches with the theoretical ideas provided by the work of Henri Lefebvre (1991) and David Harvey (1987) on the intersection and co-production of urban space and social relations (cf. Morell 2015). Drawing on these ideas to analyse the ethnographic material gathered in Hay Mohammadi, I have argued in this dissertation that the urban lower class should be looked at not only through the prism of traditional understandings of class – i. e. based on their place within and relation to the means of economic production –, but also in relation to the production of new modes of consumption and social aspirations as well as the creation of different social geographies with their attendant everyday rhythms and routines (cf. Harvey 1987: 86).

While some anthropologists of Morocco such as Mohammed Tozy (1999, 2011) have maintained that social organization needs to be approached with an eye to categories like ethnic, religious, and tribal affiliation, I have argued that in the case of Hay Mohammadi social space and its unequal distribution in the wider urban context of Casablanca plays a crucial role in the production of social difference. As such, I see my contribution to the study of class in a Moroccan context to echo the conclusions of other recent studies, which have shown that urban spaces and the social and political relationships they promote or constrain play a large part in recent processes of local social, legal, and political transformations. (cf. Newcomb 2008, Ait Mouss 2011, Berriane 2013). As the prospect of urban enclaves and further fragmentation looms on the horizon, the transformations that these dynamics will spell for the (re)production of social structures in Moroccan society will require further research.

While my intent has been to shift both analytical as well as discursive focus away from monumental events and towards the mundane areas of everyday life, it is in moments

that can only be described as eventful that the disjuncture between dominant discourses and the pressing concerns of ordinary people is most powerfully fleshed out. At the same time, I maintain that as the substantive focus of our discipline the domain of the everyday, the ordinary and its micro-histories are essential for producing experience-near accounts of place, while at the same time addressing the workings of larger scale economic, social and political forces. Although I cannot provide a definition of the everyday (and, notably, this was not the aim of the dissertation), I have attempted to establish a sense of its diversity and crucial significance for both effecting and understanding social change.

Finally, this dissertation is necessarily only a partial account of the myriad interactions and dynamics that animated and structured the production of Hay Mohammadi's physical and social spaces. Nevertheless, I believe that my conclusions resonate with similar spaces and practices in Morocco and in the wider region. Having come a long way since Setha Low's 1996 article calling on anthropologists to theorize the city, urban ethnographies have seriously addressed the need for an ethnography *in* and not simply *of* cities (cf. Gulick 1989). As such, this dissertation has been concerned with local specificity, while also placing both people and place within larger frameworks of production. I have thus also followed the trajectory of local elites into the orbit of Hay Mohammadi's social and cultural life, and the networks of resources and influence they engendered and drew upon. My objective has been neither to provide an exhaustive account of this 'mythical' neighbourhood, nor a 'solution' to the issues affecting the lives and spaces presented in the chapters. Rather, I have sought to problematize the facile readings and perceptions of poverty, marginality, and what it means to be 'at home' with contemporary life in Morocco. I have done this out of a conviction to shift analytical and sympathetic attention away from the master narratives about 'city-ness' and postcolonial marginality, most notably typified in existing studies of a handful of "iconic mega-cities" (Krause 2013: 234) such as Cairo, Lagos, Delhi, and Mumbai (Gandy 2005, Hosagrahar 2006, Mehrotra 2006, AlSayyad 2011, Boo 2012). In documenting some of the ambivalent ways in which the inhabitants of Hay Mohammadi managed to 'feel at home' with uncertainty, reconciling contingency with opportunity, criminalization with prideful belonging, and state promises with on-going struggles, a particular register of everyday practice emerged. And while this 'skilled' way of being-in-the-world has proven to be a powerful resource to my interlocutors, I would like to caution against the moral, political and material stakes of romanticising or reifying their pragmatism and 'make-do' attitude.

Instead I believe these findings call for further re-examination of how social change and its spatialization is occurring in Moroccan urban areas, pushing us as anthropologists to engage with the fluid and constantly re-negotiated character of local difference.

Appendix A - Glossary*

al-'aroubiya: the countryside

'aroubiyin: country-folk, rural inhabitants

beldi: traditional, of the country

beraka: self-built informal house typically found of the urban margins

bidonville: informal settlement (Fr.)

butagas: shorthand for butane gas canisters used in home cooking

al-Dawla: the State

dejallaba: a long, loose-fitting unisex robe with long wide sleeves and a baggy hood

ftour: the meal that breaks the fast during Ramadan

al-hay: the neighbourhood

haddaryin: urban, civilized

hadga: an assemblage of desirable qualities in a woman ready for marriage and a homemaker

inchallah: 'God willing'

jam'iyya: social welfare organization

karyane: informal settlement (dar.)

kissaria: covered market

riad: traditional home built around a central courtyard

sha'abi: popular, working class

tagine: Moroccan stew

charmoula: a marinade; also urban slang for 'thug'

*Note that these are glosses for these terms and are not meant to provide the full range of meaning. The terms and their contextualized meaning are further explained as they are introduced in the text.

Appendix B – List of figures

Figure

Appendix C – *Bghina Hakna* Lyrics

The song was usually performed in darija, but the video recorded by the association also provided French subtitles. Transcription of the lyrics in French and darija courtesy of the youth from the *Arts de Rue* club, at Initiative Urbaine.

Et si nous pouvons aussi, révéler la bonne foi chez vous

Nous ne cherchons pas votre argent mais vous devez nous prouver que vous n'allez pas maltraiter les enfants malgré vos promesses

Même si vous nous donnez le droit à la vie, à quoi cela nous sert si nous sommes prives du droit de jouer à tout moment, que pouvons nous faire de notre droit à la liberté

Si nous vivons dans l'ignorance et ne connaissons même pas le sens du mot développement

Même si l'association a éduqué, aide et scolarisé les garçons et les filles, a libéré des droits et des libertés

Il y a encore des enfants qui vivent dans la privation et la maltraitance, l'injustice et la frustration, c'est notre réalité.

Tout ceci fais couler la rancune dans leurs veines. Malheureusement, ces gens-la, ils sont nombreux dans notre pays et dans notre univers

[Refrène x 2]

On veut nos droits On veut la vie One veut habiter ici jusqu'à la mort On ne veut pas que nos mos restent que de rîmes

Les droits de l'enfant sont mes droits et tes droits

Ahna jayna qassdine qlubkoum Wa ila qadina nfaiqu al-khir ila kan fa nfouskoum

Mahna tam'aine likoum flousskoum walakin tbarhnou lina bila makta'diwsh tifl bihlofkom

Wakha ta'tiwna hakna fi-al hayat Ash ghan ndiro bih wahna mahromine mal la'ab fi kol a sa'at Ash 'adna mandirou bi hakna bla houria

Wahna ayshine fi-al jehl ma 'arfinsh ta ma'ana tenmia

Wakha al jam'iyya tealamat, taqerrat, te'awnat drari wa deriyate, wa kherat bezzaf dial houkouk wa khouriat wa

Baqi shHal men wahed kaysbah fi-al jahl wa doulm ou lherman

Wli khla al hiqd fi damu yibat Wa lil assaf, hadouhouma li fi bladna, wa li fi-al 'alam dialna , 'adadhoum bezzaf

[Chorus x 2]

Bghina al houkouk Bghina al hayat Bghina n'aich hna hta al mat Mabghitch quf dyali beqa ghir kalimat.

Hak attifl hak yhouwa hakak

Notre devoir est de s'unir contre l'existence des enfants des rues,

Nous ne voulons pas de violence physique et psychique

Ni d'enfants qui travaillent dans les magasins, les maisons et les usines

Ne privons pas nos enfants de leur bonheur

Nos enfants doivent aller à l'école et que le sourire soit toujours sur leur visages

Ils sont l'avenir de notre société Laissons-pas nos enfants dans les rues

[Refrène]

On veut nos droits On veut la vie One veut habiter ici jusqu'à la mort On ne veut pas que nos mos restent que de rîmes

Wajibna wadamin tasharoud wa h
Mabghinach al'anf jasadyi wa nafsi

Ma-ya'amelou fi-al matajir wa-l manazili, wa-l masana'ai

Manhamout attfalna men al-saada

Yqraou wa fi-al jawhoum dima ibtisama

Huma moustakbal moujtama'na
Manhalyou attfalna fi shawari'a

[Chorus]

Bghina al houkouk Bghina al
hayat Bghina n'aich hna hta al mat
Mabghitch quf dyali beqa ghir kalimat.

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